

THE

MERCANTILE LOVERS.

DRAMATIC SATIRE;

*Perform'd, for the Benefit of a friend, at the Theatre-Royal York, to a
crowded and polite Audience,*

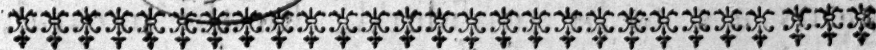
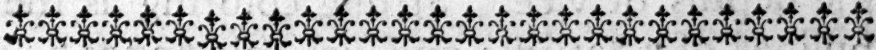
(With ALTERATIONS)

By GEORGE WALLIS,

Author of the JUVENALIAD, &c.

*Turpitudinis alienæ Species, in Theatrum producta, a Vitiis deterret; &
ad Virtutem extimulat Ingenia non omnino deplorata.*

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L O N D O N

Printed; and Sold by J. JOHNSON, No. 72, in Saint Paul's Church
Yard; and by J. TODD, Bookseller, in Sonegate, York, 1775;
where may be had the JUVENALIAD, and PERJURY, by the same
Author,



The P R E F A C E.

THE Dramatic Satire now offer'd to the public, is not exactly the same as represented; some parts being thought rather too indelicate. The Author desirous of depriving it of every expression that could be suppos'd to call a blush into the cheek of modesty, has alter'd such scenes as were consider'd offensive; and though he could not, consistently with the plot of his piece, totally lose sight of his story; yet he has endeavour'd to convey it in terms most unexceptionable; nay, he would rather wish to abate of the small share of satiric force he enjoys, than raise one uneasy sensation in the bosom of innocence. His view, in the character of Spruce, was not to give birth to any unchaste ideas, but to shew however puritanic a set of beings may in public wish to appear, yet behind the curtain they readily plunge into the depths of vice. Strong coloring is the business of a Satirist; and such coloring as best suits the taste of that particular class of people, who are most likely to fall into errors he labors to abolish. Their conceptions are to be consider'd; for the natural, THO' NOT OVER DELICATE, delineations of a HOGARTH will with numbers, we know, have a stronger effect, than the fine touches of a superior pencil; because better adapted to their comprehensions. Gratitude how-

THE P R E F A C E.

ever to a generous audience demanded from the author a careful revision of his piece; and the strong desire of pleasing made it an agreeable duty. Happy for him the nature of his plan has not render'd the task impracticable; for his attempt was only to try the force of dialogue, without having in the present performance any higher views; and in this to attack such vices as were detrimental to society, avoiding all personality; though unjustly accus'd of the design. If through the course of these scenes any particular characters are said to be drawn from individuals, the fault lies not with the Author; it dwells only in the prolific brain of those SONS OF DISCERNMENT, who see in every man's features the things they wish; as they hear in the very gingle of bells the voice of prophecy.

The ridiculous notions, and base practices of many men may be here in one character depicted; these it must be allow'd are proper food for Satire, and carry not along with them the severity of personal reflection. The Author, therefore, asks only a candid perusal of his work. If it does not displease his friends, he is satisfied---if it amuses the impartial, it will add to his pleasure---if it corrects a fool, or reforms a knave, he is rewarded---but if it steals, for the smallest space of time, one afflicted man from his misery; it more than recompences him for every portion of his labor.

P R O L O G U E,

Written by the AUTHOR,

And spoke by Mr. RAYMUR.

Custom of late so great a tyrant's grown,
That he who dares oppose is tumb'd down,
Peevish, perverse, or contra-mundum still'd,
Or be he error's son, or virtue's child;
For virtue oft delights alone to stray,
Live by herself, and keep the devious way.

Nay frown, not, critics! of the awful Pit,
Sou reigns confess'd of all theatric wit:

Nor you, sweet Cherubs! who adorn this house,
With black displeasure corrugate your brows:

Ye elevated Gods! nor you declare,
Against this notion elemental war;

Ask, ask your hearts---nay don't like cowards sneak;
What says reflection? does it virtue speak?

Will none reply? suppose I take a peep?
Virtue alas! how pale! how sound asleep!

So thinks the doughty Champion of to night;
Girds on his armor for the doubtful fight;

Draws out his phalanx to th' embattl'd field,
No sword his weapon, or his guard no shield;

With whip, with mirror arms each single hand,
For conquest thirsts, he'll charge at my command.

I'll give the alarum---tremble not, ye beaux!

He deals not out this night such rarishews,
As pretty fellows, slaves to pretty cloaths;

Wrap'd in themselves--he lets such triflers pass
And leaves each soft Narcissus to his gla's.

P R O L O G U E.

Nor you, ye prudes ! if such odd things there be,
 Apply thro' prudent fear to ratifia ;
 Nor dash with cordials spleen-creative tea :
 Soft white, and red, deceitful Gallia's pride,
 Drear age's furrows may securely hide ;
 The fashionable theft who treats with scorn ?
 Or roses blast, which blush upon a — thorn ?
 The borrow'd bloom of youth he'll not disclose,
 Nor your sham virtue, for the world, expose.

'Gainst vice alone he draws the poignant quill ;
 And aims destruction with his utmost skill :
 *Unsocial notions wraps in human guise,
 Attacks not men, but acts personifies ;
 The scenes here fix'd, no characters explain,
 And if they live they in idea reign.
 †I bad his puny Muse her efforts try :
 He blush'd---he paus'd ; till friendship cast the dye ;
 The pow'rful impulse all his fancy fir'd,
 Rouz'd his invention, and his pen inspir'd.

To you, ye fair ! for patronage he sues,
 Ye fair ! the pride, the glory of his Muse !
 Soft peace's downy pinions gently spread,
 Defend the young ster, hover o'er his head :
 Guardians so tender sure protection give ;
 Breath forth fond hope ; and bid the stripling live.

*The Author, before the exhibition of the Play, was accus'd of being personal in his Satire ; hence the reason of introducing these lines.

†The Play was wrote meerly to serve Mr. Raymur.

Dramatis Personæ.

Swash,	- - - - -	Mr. Wilkinson.
Testy,	- - - - -	Mr. Oram.
Sarcasm,	- - - - -	Mr. Raymur.
Charles,	- - - - -	Mr. Payne.
Allgrace,	- - - - -	Mr. Eyles.
Schemer,	- - - - -	Mr. Buck.
Pomposo,	- - - - -	Mr. Leng.
Spruce,	- - - - -	Mr. Powell.
Trim,	- - - - -	Mr. Suett.
Lucinda,	- - - - -	Mrs. Cornellys.
Sophy,	- - - - -	Mrs. Hitchcock.
Mrs. Testy,	} Characters added since the	performance.
Betty,		

T H E
MERCANTILE LOVERS.

A C T I.

Room in TESTY's House.

Enter TESTY and CHARLES.

Test. **I** Tell you I never will forgive him—'tis impossible to bear his repeated ill behaviour—Have I not tried different means, but all to no purpose?—Is it not his daily, nay his hourly practice to give offence to some one, or other, of the family? and yet you, forsooth, admire him for his cynical censure, and call it wit.—A plague take all such wit say I.

Char. But hear me, Sir!

Test. 'Zounds, Sir, can't a man be witty, as you call it, but he must cut up his very brother alive, and feed upon his tortures? I'd rather have three grains of goodnature, than an hundred weight of wit like this—Wit with a pox to him.

Ch. But do, Sir! for once give me leave to plead in his behalf—at the very worst we can but accuse him of folly—ridiculous enough, I grant you—but all men have their follies; most men vices.

Test. What the plague! is not that as bad, as the worst of vices, which teizes, and vexes us to death?

Ch. A meer trifle, when compar'd to his more shining qualities.

Test. Psha! stuff! how can you clear him?

Ch. You know you have repeatedly confes'd, you thought him perfectly honest, possess'd of a good heart, and a proper companion for your son—Nor have you been deceiv'd in your opinion of him.

Test. Mighty fine!—mighty fine!—all this.

Ch. The integrity of his conduct, has prov'd him invaluable—you now wou'd not for a trifle discard him—therefore—

Test. Therefore what? you'll disoblige your father to encourage a puppy.

Ch. Pardon me, Sir! I cannot help being a warm advocate in his cause—I know the goodness of his heart so well; that, upon cooler reflection, you will not only forgive, but laugh at the very motive of your anger.

Test. What reason was there Charles! for his impertinent contradiction? wit is the term you give it—To tell me when I us'd the word notorious, it did not always mean rascally.—Was it not calling me a fool? and then a sneering scoundrel! to affirm, it might be as applicable to me, or any great man, as to a Nevison; or a Turpin.

Ch. There he was certainly right—for——

Test. 'Sdeath! and fire! has it not been handed down to us in this light ever since the first Testy was born? and I beleive, we are as numerous, and antient a family as any in the three kingdoms—nay, I might say, as in all Europe.

Ch. Exercise your patience for a moment.

Test. I can't—I won't be patient—did he not the other day, when I shew'd him my elegant contrivance—a contrivance—which cost me a world of thinking—of covering two projections of a dead wall in the front of my garden house—the very recollection makes my blood boil.

Ch. Well, Sir, of the projections of your dead walls——

Test. By two box trees, cut in the form of a stag cooring, with his horns branching out—did he not, I say, laugh at my ingenuity, and tell me, I was the first man who claim'd applause for clapping horns upon his own front?

Ch. The disapprobation of the project more than the impertinence stirs his gall (*aside*)—But the allusion was jocular, you see—you, Sir! was not characteriz'd—he meant only to enliven conversation—the speech won't bear examining—no man can clap horns upon his own forehead.

Test. You're a fool I tell you—Thus he explain'd himself, when I began to argue—For the sake of perspicuity Sir! only, says the sneering blockhead, you'll permit the stroke—Here stands the old garden wall, moldering by time—meer dust and ashes—clapping his hand upon my forehead.

Ch. Well, Sir!

Test. Agreed says I, and what of that? don't you think eighty three coupl'd to a blooming, gay, inviting girl of twenty two—a case in point.—What you must all come to—placing his fingers thus.

Ch. So, so—I find the sting—a home thrust that, but I must not see it.—(*aside*)

Test.

Test. Had he been blest'd with more civility, and less wit as you term it—he wou'd have been taught, if he cou'd say nothing in favour of my project, to have remain'd silent at least.

Ch. I am truly sensible, good Sir! of the folly of such conduct—it is ever the curse of wit to destroy its own intrest by promoting the laugh of others—cou'd we divest him of this turn, we shou'd find very few men worthier than himself—'tis a common charge against him, that he will sooner hazard his friend, then relinquish his joke.

Test. So the dog will quarrel with his bread and butter; and get his head broke, for the name of a wit?

Ch. Lively fallies of this nature are indeed too enchanting to young minds, buoy'd up with the appearance of superiority—tho' I think we shou'd well weigh the motives of men's actions, not the consequences, then shall we judge right—As for my own part I cannot think he meant so much to hurt you, as to laugh with you.

Test. To laugh at me you mean—However I will immediately consult my dictionary, that miracle of learning; and if I find the dog wrong, I'll unkennel the young cub to the whole family; and the devil's in't if they don't hunt him down—for they all owe him a grudge—an impertinent scoundrel—Notorious—notorious——

Exit.

Enter SARCASM.

Sarc. Well, my dear Charles! what success?

Ch. None at all.

Sarc. What answer did the old man make to the hints you gave him?

Ch. None at all.

Sarc. In what manner did he behave? did he smile?

Ch. No.

Sarc. Did he frown, look serious, or seem to think?

Ch. No.

Sarc. Was he in a rage? in fine, what did he?

Ch. Nothing at all.

Sarc. Why zounds! does he exist? or is he totally annihilated? answer me but some question rationally and I shall be satisfied.

Ch. Indeed, Sarcasm! I am not a little surpriz'd, that your ready wit, shou'd be so blind, as not to find out when last my father left you he was in dudgeon—so highly exasperated—that had chance supplied him with courage, like some of our gentle sons of war, to wear a sword, he wou'd certainly have sent you a challenge.

Sar. What mean you?

Ch. That wit is like a good Physician, understands most men's cases, but his own.

Sarc. Do prithee unriddle, nor hide thy head in clouds any longer—I am in no humor for jesting.

A a

Ch.

Ch. I wish you were in this humor oftner—but not to keep you longer in suspense.—The severity of your Sarcasms, have given my father such offence, and so ruff'd his temper, that I had no opportunity of sounding him—I was too much engag'd in making your peace.

Sarc. Trifles, meer trifles—I cannot think so meanly of his understanding, as to suppose the violence of resentment wou'd generate in his bosom for a spirit of humor, or whim of expression.

Ch. Trifles offend oftner than matters of greater moment; and the offence is of longer duration.

Sarc. It cannot be.

Ch. But so it is—In affairs of consequence, Men will generally think, take reason along with them, coolly deliberate, and fairly conclude; but in slighter concerns, passion too commonly takes the lead, and if once wrong, forever persists—A confession of error is an impeachment of understanding to illiberal minds; and pride, false pride, will not suffer them either to confess, or forgive.

Sarc. My knowledge of life has not yet supply'd me with this information.

Ch. Study therefore propriety of conduct, as well as propriety of speech; nor ever think of curing the whim of old age by the salt of wit; or laughing it out of error by the force of ridicule; the attempt will never succeed: For old age boasts experience, and ever assumes a self consequence, which younger minds may, sometimes, justly despise, but must yield to.

Sarc. Curse my unfortunate tongue! if ever I am guilty again may—

Ch. Make no protestations, for you are like a rake of reflection, who, when tortur'd with the head-ach the morning after a debauch, swears he'll be drunk no more—vanish pain, vanish reflection—for the very same company produce the same incitements to intemperance, and in the evening he hiccoughs, and roars aloud——“For drinking souls can never die.”

Sarc. I find Charles! tho' you have good nature to make yourself universally belov'd; and prudence to check your thoughts occasionally, yet when you please, your reflections don't want poignancy.—But what's to be done?

Ch. At present nothing—till I can get my father into temper—in the mean time improve upon this lesson I give you—Wink at the follies of mankind, for no man cares to be expos'd—Bear with their ignorance, for every man wou'd be thought wise—Improve from their vices by avoiding such things as render them contemptible.

Sarc. I like the lesson; still I fear the task will be too hard for me—but as it is the advice of honest friendship, I'll make the bold attempt and endeavour, at least, to prove; that tho' our natural propensities cannot be totally subdu'd, they may be kept within the bounds of mediocrity [*Ex.*

SCENE, LUCINDA *discover'd*.

Luc. Heigh ho! how strange is my situation? so different from myself—scarce any thing gives me that pleasure I us'd to feel—nor do I enjoy that ease, and heart-felt satisfaction, I was wont to do.—I am dragg'd to routs, assemblies, plays without pleasure; and to church without devotion—in fine, the face of things is so alter'd, that I seem to live in another world, breath another air, and associate with a set of beings who feed my disgust—From whence the change? let me examine my heart—fear, doubt, anxiety disturb my peace—and what the cause? am I in love? aye, there's the rock—then, am I lost indeed—But shall I tamely submit to the first attack of the enemy? no, that's too cowardly—beyond the rules of timid delicacy—I'll rally all my force, and if he dares attempt to conquer by a regular siege; I can employ his artillery some time—if he offers proper articles of capitulation, all may be well—but shou'd he attempt to storm—Well, dear Lucinda! a miracle may save thee.

Enter SPRUCE.

Spr. Miss Sophy wou'd be glad to speak with you, madam!—Are you at home?

Luc. I'll attend her directly.—[*Exit Spruce*]—Now, must I assume my natural gaiety of temper—in my present situation how difficult the task!—The world commands, we must obey—for without a fair outside, too many of our sexes only virtue—a little modish hypocrisy, what wou'd become of us? our hearts must live in all our actions, peep in every eye—what then the consequence? O prudence! still protect us—I tremble at the thought.—*Exit.*

SCENE, a Dressing Room, to SOPHY *enter* LUCINDA.

Luc. Good morrow, my dear Sophy!

Soph. Good morrow, Lucinda! how did your last night's entertainment agree with you?

Luc. Perfectly well—I scarce need ask you the question—for if the face is any index to the mind, your's clearly express'd your happiness—I should have imagined my brother a dying Adonis; but I know his philosophy makes him laugh at love and all its votaries.

Soph. There you may be deceiv'd.

Luc. I declare there is not any mortification, I wou'd not on my own account almost suffer, to see him most unmercifully in love with a girl of my spirit, and caprice.

Soph. Why so?

Luc. I think if he was fairly caught, it wou'd puzzle all his logic, syllogisms, and nonsense to get loose—notwithstanding he is so immoderately vain, and piques himself upon his own fortitude.

Soph.

Soph. I think you are too severe upon your brother—For I have generally observ'd sensible men, capable of the tenderest impressions; and surely he cannot be devoid of those of love—at least—(sighs)—I—

Luc. Hope he is not—ha! ha! ha! ha!—You my dear! it seems are capable of very tender impressions; and faith, have receiv'd them in no small degree—I declare Sophy! it has altered your looks—you seem now to have some meaning in those pretty eyes of yours, and that agreeable reclining of the head, bespeaks you no novice in the art of languishing.

Soph. How can you talk so madly?

Luc. Love! my dear, has always been esteem'd the best school for manners, if we may believe the accounts of proficient—what we have of the rude and boisterous about us, it corrects, and molifies—encreases, or rather heightens, our sensibility—quickens our invention—improves our understanding—rouzes our humanity—and learns us the pleasing lesson of friendly sympathy.—In short my dear! 'tis the thing in nature for humanizing the men, and making most egregious fools of the women without any disagreeable consequences—For the one don't grow vain upon their improvement, nor the other blush at their folly—For impulses like those, no one guard against, they are only proper conformities to the law of nature—ha! ha! ha!

Soph. A truce, dear Lucinda! with your raillery—I came to open my whole heart to you, and ask your advice.

Luc. And like a true slave of the little blind Boys run directly counter to what I give, if it contradicts your inclination—tell your Enamorata, if it does not coincide with his—so by that means, I shall experience his contempt, and ten to one your hatred.

Soph. Pish! do dear mad brains! hear me—try me—and if I merit it, condemn me—do for a few moments be serious, and attend.

Luc. Seriously then I will—But on these conditions—that during the course of your tale, we have no heigh-hos! or ah me's! nor any love sick ejaculations by way of digression—but keep strictly to the matter—no circumlocution—but to the point at once—on these terms proceed.

Soph. From the long continuance of our acquaintance, and the repeated trial of our—

Luc. Stop my dearest girl! I prohibit all long speeches—you've broke the articles of agreement at setting out—Brevity is the soul of wit, so is it of conversation: you mean to tell me after a long preface, you acknowledge me your friend—That little word, applied from the heart, conveys more than all the labor'd sentences of modish refinement—Be brief, my dear Sophy! for tho' I have undertaken to hear the story of all your woes, yet believe me, my heart is not totally free from some impertinents, I shan't easily get rid of.

Soph.

Soph. If I should ridiculously form any conclusions, favourable to my own wishes, without having a solid foundation to build upon, I may possibly be led into a fool's Paradise; for I wou'd wish to flatter myself, I am not wholly indifferent to your brother.

Luc. No, that I'll be sworn thou ar'n't, if I have any sagacity, or skill in love's logic—But what are your reasons for thinking so?

Soph. A particular attention to me in company—an assiduity in doing every thing he thinks will please—a softness in his manner—gentleness in his deportment, with a thousand sighs, which seem to steal imperceptibly from his breast, whenever he converses with me—and in fine, a pleasing something diffus'd thro' all his actions, which whispers him my slave—and——

Luc. Calls aloud that you are his—Well, my dear little captive! where's the necessity for advice? from your account the God of Love has been busy with you both; and from your educations, fortunes, connections, and inclinations, there does not seem to be any bar to your happiness—but as yet, I perfume, he has not declar'd himself openly to you—hence your little, hoping, fluttering soul is all doubt.

Soph. In truth that is the case—I was in hopes yesterday he was going to make a tender of his passion—but Sarcasm impertinently bounc'd into the room; and put a stop to our conversation—therefore I came hither to hear your opinion—least by flattering myself too much, I might lay the foundation for my future unhappiness—and now we are alone——

Enter SARCASM not observing them.

Psha! he here again.

Luc. How quick the methamorphosis! what a provoking wretch this little Cupid is!—step into my dressing room, I'll be with you in a moment. (*Exit Sophy*)—Dejected—in deep reverie—muttering to himself—perhaps he'll not observe me—haply I may discover some secret in which I may be interested—for I have not been without some suspicions—I'll not disturb him.

Sarc. (*talking to himself*)—I fear my friend cannot prevail—The task is difficult—tho' the offence is trivial—and obstinacy in old men is as hard to conquer as superstition in a bigot—pomposity in fools—or folly in a virtuoso—still I cou'd bear it all—but Lucinda, that dear—that charming—

Luc. So, so, is it so?

Sarc. That adorable girl distracts me—The thoughts of leaving her—nay, perhaps, from my own curs'd folly, of losing her for ever, so totally unman me; that I cou'd almost wish myself a driv'ler, or any thing but what I am.

Luc. Then sweet Sir! thou might'st be lost indeed—for I wou'd not have an atom of thee chang'd for all the world.

Sarc.

Sarc. What can I do? I may not have an opportunity of seeing her again—curs'd thought!—or of speaking to her alone—horrid reflection!

Luc. I'll take care of that.

Sarc. Or—O curse these ors, I shall Or myself into a sea of despair, if I go on in this manner—I will declare myself to her directly—make her father discharge me for my presumption—turn priest, and rail at all mankind the remainder of my life.

Luc. Pious resolution!—However since I know my cue, I'll retire—and give thee honest Sarcasm! a favourable opportunity of preventing thy misery, and my own. *Exit.*

Enter CHARLES.

Sarc. Well my dear boy! what's the event?

Ch. Not what I cou'd wish, or you deserve—all that I can do with my father is to permit you to reside here some time longer—exert your self, and by studying common sense, you may be again reinstated in his favor.

Sarc. What! by talking of carrots and cabbages—country politicians and old women—preaching philosophy to farmers; proving rack rents are the road to riches, and enclosing commons for the good of the poor—improving the mind, and enlarging its ideas by reading the *Repository* of the York Chronicle—learning to despise my old acquaintance, because a great man smiles upon me, and I have no further use for them—and bidding adieu to every object but interest.

Ch. An elegant specimen of reformation.

Sarc. The dulcet notes of a dying swan.

Ch. Beware of witticisms, no more edg'd tools—go exchange your keen wit for moral dullness—commence man of the world—learn flattery—'tis the best trade you can drive, I'll promise you.

Sarc. But not the easiest. (*Exit Charles*)—In what unhappy perplexities am I involv'd! in love with a girl, who a thousand to one will laugh at me—laid under severe restrictions by her father, who hates me—put into a state of probation by the friendly endeavours of a companion I wou'd not disoblige.—Wit, and dependance were not curses sufficient for me—but I must add hopeless love to the catalogue—why, Sarcasm! did'st thou obey the pleasing, tho' heav'nly call of nature, and rashly fly from the dull laws of mathematic disquisition—for there to torment thee, breathes neither wit, woman, nor uncertainty.

Exit.

SCENE,

A DRAMATIC SATIRE.

SCENE, a Garden before SCHEMER'S House.

Enter ALLGRACE.

Allgr. What a comfortable existence have I now procur'd myself from the strong credulity of a set of blind enthusiasts! one incoherent rhapsody, thunder'd forth from the well exercis'd lungs of hypocrisy, supplies me more lavishly with the necessaries, and secret pleasures of life, than all the regular discourses of morality—What matters it, tho' the disapprobation of the sensible, and truly good shou'd be the consequence? persecution is our bulwark, and so firmly cements our interests with our followers, that no earthly power can break it—it makes *saints* of us all—oh! blessed avocation!—of what use is reason? puritanic grace, artful perversion of truth to our own purposes; and forcible denunciation of vengeance against the vice of ignorance, that is, against all such as will not permit us to be their leaders, are instruments more serviceable—they make us believ'd virtue's ambassadors, and the great turnpike road to happiness—oh! the powerful force of glorious dissimulation! Now for a different branch of my profession—Schemer has sent for me, anxious to hear my plan—success is certain—for I know of no arguments so well calculated to enforce belief, as a mild, oily tongue, grave countenance, and a black coat. *Exit.*

SCENE, SCHEMER'S House.

Enter POMPOSO and SCHEMER.

Pomp. Well, Schemer! this plan of ours was well laid, and conducted with secrecy worthy a prime minister—Those anonymous letters we have sent will have weight, and work upon the old fellow—For men of his kidney are apt to believe every accusation against the folly, and vice of youth; and catch every opportunity of railing at the depravity of the age—The hey-day of their blood being over, they hate the sin they can no longer commit—and think it wond'rous odd, that twenty-two cannot be as cool, and considerate, as seventy.

Sch. 'Tis even so—Nor are they willing to pardon those very faults in young men, they when young were apt to pursue.

Pomp. Our accusations then must have some force; and probably weaken these sparks interests with the young girls; or egregiously mistake, and that I'm not apt to do—besides the old fellow has faith enough to believe the story of a Cock-lane Ghost, or Bottle Conjuror.

Sch. I don't doubt our success with him—Our property is sufficient to secure us in that point—The intimate connection with a girl of infamy—The propensity to sevens the main, with Sarcasm's want of fortune, will be arguments strong enough against him—he'll be a bankrupt in Testy's opinion, that's positive—hence Lucinda's safe.

Pomp. But how is Sophy to be secur'd?

Sch. The pretence of a family madness in her will be an insurmountable obstacle.

Pomp. But how is that to be prov'd?

Sch. By money, and the arguments of physick—a great, great, great grandfather of hers fell from his horse, and died delirious—Now, for a large fee, my physician, for physick like law reasons most minutely by large fees, will swear the seeds of madness were inherent in his constitution, and this very shock was but the cause which put it in motion.

Pomp. But the complaint so far remov'd cannot be suppos'd to exist in Sophy now.

Sch. Lord, Sir! 'tis a malady, so physical reasoning, I am inform'd allows, may lie dormant for ages, and then exert its power—'Tis but ransacking a few histories of diseases, and they can prove any thing—That Salt will bring a man to life, who has been drown'd seven hours, and laid all the time under water—That women will kindle rabbits—Englishmen digest iron—Frenchmen gold—That the gout may be eradicated out of the constitution by the nostrum of an empiric—And what is most extraordinary, *most* of the faculty believe all these things to be true.

Pomp. I never thought before these medical knight errants were so very profitable, or useful members of society—There is nothing like a fertile invention, and a good assurance, for getting thro' life—But shou'd these difficulties be surmounted, as they only arise from report, we may be foil'd.

Sch. Those letters I consider only as the prelude—proof must be contriv'd, and such as cannot be denied—proof upon oath.

Pomp. But how's that to be manag'd? false oaths are dangerous things—instruments few people are hardy enough to meddle with—fear, fear keeps them in awe.

Sch. Good lord!—Perjury is food of the easiest digestion—I have known it sit as light on a certain Alderman's stomach—as custard, or whip-syllabub—Besides it is as common now a days in courts of law—as stout footmen in an old dowager's service—or handsome officers in a fine lady's closet—'tis the very life, and soul of practice; was it not for this, a simple tale in the court of equity wou'd be the best plea.

Pomp. But are you sure of your man?

Sch. Aye! if occasion requires of the whole family—By this time, he is in the next room—'tis Allgrace, the Methodist—the project is of his own forming—and waits only for our approbation.

Pomp.

A DRAMATIC SATIRE.

11

Pomp. But how will he get over his religious scruples?

Sch. As physic does its conscientious ones—by money, the grand mover of all things, here below—a comfortable livelihood makes him an hypocrite to his maker to day, and for a well fill'd purse, he'll forswear the supreme to morrow—and turn atheist—But you shall hear him.

Pomp. A mighty useful, and very convenient member this—I'll follow you. *Exeunt.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE, SCHEMER'S House.

Enter SCHEMER, POMPOSO, and ALLGRACE.

Schemer. **W**ELL, Mr. Allgrace! since you have voluntarily promised us an history of your life, as a proof of your qualifications, we shall be oblig'd to you for the account.

Allgr. My birth, and education being as low as poverty, and indolence cou'd make them—I shall do like the rest of mankind of mean extraction, who have become fortune's favorites, entirely forget them; because they cannot give me consequence.

Pomp. The way of the world.

Allgr. From the school of charity I was bound apprentice, where I learnt the rudiments of my present occupation, to a mouse-trap maker—emblem of my future greatness—with the character of a steady, diligent, good lad; which I did not deserve a single letter of.

Sch. What! does charity blot its name with imposition?

Allgr. Aye truly—and calls it virtue—for by this means your *compassionate* mistresses too often give base servants the best of characters—tho' the character of a neighbour, they destroy thro' unwarrantable resentment—and stile it *JUSTICE*.

Pomp. You staid not long with him I presume?

Allgr. My genius cou'd not be cramp'd by wood, wire, and steel springs—I soon ran away, and enlisted into a marching regiment, where for cowardice, and other offences which soldiers call atrocious, I was flog'd into liberty, and commenc'd—free agent.

Sch. This stroke was terrible.

Allgr. Not at all—For by this school I was qualified for bully to a brothel—where impudence forms the fine fellow—the man of fire—upon my honor makes veracity a cypher—and damme Sir! with a fierce look, tho' less chargeable, is more terrible than a writ or a lord mayor's warrant.

Pomp. What service was you of here?

Allgr. Great was my utility—for here I made avarice sip of the cup of profusion—liv'd pander to good husbands, and sly sinners—and pimp to any thing I could get a shilling by.

Sch. Profitable employment.

Allgr. And might have long continu'd so—for my mistress was excellent in her profession—she had food for every palate, from trembling lechery in his grand climacteric, to *master* with his cockade.

Pomp. What disturb'd you?

Allgr.

Allgr. A sage cynic, chasten'd by the icy hand of time, destroy'd this temple of Venus, made an exile of poor Succumbissa to London; where her profession wantons under the wing of power, if it can but pay large tribute for its licence.

Sch. This downfall cou'd not be easily recover'd.

Allgr. Fortune tho' often sporting with me, did not yet totally forsake me—For Sir Frigid Fiddle-faddle, a profess'd Macaroni, took me into his service, fed, cloath'd, and pamper'd me, till I was as impudent, and as finish'd a party color'd coxcomb, as any in the three kingdoms.

Pomp. Your perfections shou'd rather have recommended you to a man of more Fire, and less effeminacy—you seem better calculated for Sir Amorous Atall, then Sir Frigid.

Allgr. True Sir—But in so high estimation is the credit of an amour; that weary age and tottering infirmity will smirk, and smile at the busy tongue of scandal—drink off a goblet, *to you know who*, and swear by all that's amorous! there's no resisting temptation—tho' to look at them one wou'd conclude, repentance the business of their thoughts, and warm flannel their only consolation.

Sch. This is being in love with the name of vice.

Allgr. Intrigue is become a sort of fashionable science; and practical knowledge in this, *like some of the more learned professions*, is less sought after than the appearance.

Pomp. Impossible.

Allgr. 'Tis too true—Else shou'd we not so often see modest, intrinsic merit crawling about in a threadbare coat; whilst bold, bustling ignorance lolls in his chariot, and enjoys the affluence of deceit, and chicane.

Sch. Happiness began to dawn upon you now.

Allgr. Alas! Sir! servitude is but a very precarious situation, and so I found it—For after lying away the characters of twenty innocent girls to raise my master's consequence—I unfortunately fail'd in a subsequent attempt upon Miss Bold-face marriage-mad—hence I was set down as unfit for service, and discharged.

Pomp. This loss was to you irreparable.

Allgr. 'Twas great indeed—but like most dependants, where an entire confidence is repos'd, I feather'd my nest pretty plentifully.

Sch. By what means?

Allgr. Common tricks—Perquisites—perquisites—in which we servants always allow'd ourselves a very noble latitude—Narrow minds may call them thefts—but like our superiors we quiet all conscientious scruples by terms.

Pomp. I don't understand you.

Allgr. By glossing over the most profligate actions by the best contriv'd varnish—A young heir is cheated of his fortune at play by a set of men,

men, still'd *Men of Honour*—'tis *LUCK*—Your daughter is ruin'd by the most artful subtleties, under the most honorable pretences—'tis *GALLANTRY*—A mistress is kept under the nose of a wife—'tis *FASHION*—A lady loses her character, and money—ruins her health—destroys her time in the most despicable scenes of dissipation—'tis *TASTE*—*TASTE*—*Seeing the world—the exercise of a fine spirit unknown to little minds.*—And thus might you run thro' the whole black catalogue of vice.

Sch. You began now to mount higher in the scale of life.

Allgr. Meerly to make my fall the greater—I found a wife necessary to a man of business, and therefore I saw, admir'd, and marr'd myself.

Sch. And lov'd you mean.

Allgr. Your pardon, Sir!—I was blest'd with too fashionable notions for that—Report gave me eyes—a reputed fortune rais'd my admiration—and the hopes of fingering the cash made me marry—A strict imitation of the *Bon tau*.

Pomp. How was you then deceiv'd?

Allgr. By faith and conversion—I turn'd quaker—at the intercession of my ABISHAG's father.

Sch. What! in an instant? how's that possible?

Allgr. I pull'd the button off my hat, wore it impudently in the house of prayer—demolish'd my ruffles—threw aside every outward sign of vanity—said thou to a lord—told a flat lie with a grave face—sob'd, sigh'd, and groan'd at what I shou'd have laugh'd—pretended to believe what I did not understand, or regard—and thus equip'd, stalk'd forth one of the faithful.

Pomp. How cou'd he evade you?—an easy fortune was no bad thing in exchange for your religion?

Allgr. A sanctified scoundrel never wants a subterfuge—Large promises were calculated to work my conversion—Conversion was to become my reward—And the sweets of reformation, the best of fortunes—These I advanc'd might feed my mind—but what was to support my body?—“Patience—Patience, cries fly formality—strong hope and large faith”—The diet was too thin for me—“Patience will work wonders; I tell thee, we always cleave to one another—thou know'st not our virtue—we never go out of one path—we never look to the right, or to the left—we journey on and walk uprightly—where the finger of—interest pointeth.—And so I experienc'd—

Sch. Your fortune by these means should have been increas'd—

Allgr. From their cunning and avarice—My profits I found as small as my zeal—I took leave therefore of this scurvy order of the *upright*—and tried other less solemn moving sects, but all to no purpose, I cou'd not succeed—I was soon laid in jail by a friend to whom I did not owe a shilling, and paid my debts honorably by an act of grace. *Sch.*

Sch. This wou'd cure you for adventuring any more on so hazardous a sea.

Allgr. Positively—For some degree of honesty is necessary almost in every sphere—I therefore labor'd to find one devoid of so barren a companion, and thanks to good fortune I have at last succeeded—For after enumerating all the *excellencies* of the different avocations, and persuasions I had experienc'd, I selected their essences, and united them into one character—an itinerant bawler, or methodist preacher, at your service—ready to do any dirty work, like the rest of my brethren, with secrecy, and security.

Pomp. We are oblig'd to you, nor need we doubt your abilities; no task is too arduous for towering minds like yours.

Allgr. O! Sir—

Sch. Wave all compliment—The dish is too insubstantial for us now—Let us into your scheme.

Allgr. From the present situation of my wife, which you know—I mean to accomplish my design on one part.

Pomp. Being your wife the scheme will be abortive.

Allgr. Ha! ha! ha! Was she known to be such I grant it, it wou'd not do for you now, nor me at any time—I am not married in the eye of the world—by our living sepearte, I preach her into business—feel the reward of my labor doubly—avoid the imputation of self interest—and steal the opinion of charity, and benevolence—There are devices to gain good characters, less fallible than your virtue and honesty—Within I'll disclose the whole to you. *Exit.*

Sch. We'll attend you—What think you of the specimen? how like you it?

Pomp. Extremely—Our wishes cou'd not have fram'd a better—but I always thought there was more of the knave than saint under these shadows of sanctity—for I never knew a fellow fond of making any outward shew, but wanted inward grace. *Exit.*

SCENE, Drawing Room in TESTY'S House.

Enter LUCINDA.

Luc. So far so good—having eas'd the anxiety of my friends bosom—Now let me take care of my own—for whatever may be her situation with regard to my brother, mine is full as severe on Sarcasm's account; and notwithstanding I have given her a lesson of moderation, I do believe I shall not pursue it myself, tho' I see its rectitude—for I long to play the tyrant—at least I love that tyranny which consists in teizing—'tis delightful—it gives us such a superiority over those lordly creatures, and elevates us so much above our natural sphere; that the very height dazzles

dazzles our imagination, and makes us something more than women—I love the thought, and will indulge it—And lo! my victim comes; as Mercutio says, like a dried herring without his roe.

Enter SARCASM.

Sarc. Good morning, Miss Lucinda!

Luc. Good morning, Mr. Sarcasm.—(*gravely*)

Sarc. You seem jocular.

Luc. You seem grave.

Sarc. Seem, madam! I am.

Luc. And pray what stroke of cruel fate can banish all your usual vivacity, and load your brows with such dismal looks of dull philosophy?

Sarc. Oh! Lucinda!—You cannot surely be a stranger to the cause—The unhappy difference betwixt your father, and myself is not a secret to you.

Luc. And can the trifling offence which is not worth a moment's consideration, plunge you into such apparent distress?—You who were us'd to reason so forcible against affliction, and supply a thousand arguments in your own support—as thus—Can affliction relieve distress?—No!—Can it extricate us out of difficulties?—No!—Does it add misery to mischief?—Yes—And prevent us from taking such measures as might relieve us?—Surely?

Sarc. Do, dear madam! spare me, nor force me to blush at a weakness I cannot conquer.

Luc. These maxims, the result of sound judgement, seem now to be dead; and for what?—The trifling whim of a choleric old man—ha! ha! ha! you must excuse me; for positively I cannot help laughing.

Sarc. How insignificant!—how ridiculous do I appear!

Luc. However in pity to you—I'll turn philosopher—come let me moralize a little with you, poor, wretched, miserable offender!

Sarc. 'Tis not the anger of your father—the consequences alarm me—those I dread—I have such a group of horrid ideas crowd in upon me—that my mind is all confusion—a meer chaos—I cannot think—reason—or do any thing as I ought.

Luc. Indeed your situation is truly deplorable—but consequences—what consequences can there be that shou'd carry such terror along with them?—You cou'd not be more dejected had you offended the whole world.

Sarc. When the source of my anxiety is once publicly known—I have no reason to doubt the severity of the world.

Luc. What! have you dar'd to think for yourself?—thwarted by honest duty a great man's pleasure?—or wrote a Satire!

Sarc. Neither—Not to keep you longer in suspense—I love—sincerely love.

Luc.

Luc. Indeed—'Tis won'drous odd—in love—with whom?—my father?—hence you are miserable, least the rage of your mistress will not be easily pacified—you've reason I confess, for age is unrelenting—especially when antiquated love is once offended.

Sarc. She laughs at me already.

Luc. It must be so—else my father's rage—your love—and present infelicity cou'd not be so combin'd, as to form so perfect a picture of tragedy—You seem as if you wou'd outwhine an Altamont, or swallow poison like any Romeo.

Sarc. Raillery like yours may be *an elegant* treat to indifference—but to a heart ill at ease as mine, 'tis worse than death.

Luc. In sober sadness then I pity you—Make me your confidant—my advice may bring perhaps greater consolation than you're aware of.

Sarc. You cannot wonder, tho' you may despise me, when I declare the lovely she.

Luc. Out with it—tell me the goddess of your idolatry.

Sarc. Believe me when on my knees I swear—it is—it is—yourself.

Luc. In love with me—with me—are you sure of that?

Sarc. Indeed—Nor shou'd you be astonish'd when you consider your own accomplishments—my well known partiality for you—your sagacity wou'd not now suffer you to be at a loss, had you ever bestow'd one moment's thought on me.

Luc. And wou'd you have had me run the risque of sacrificing, like the trifling tribe of modern Misses, my understanding to my vanity—by figuring to myself, you were a slave to a passion you never so much as hinted at—and, by that means, have become the sport of your wit, and the laugh of the world—If this was your situation, why so tardy in declaring it, where no obstacles presented themselves?

Sarc. Completely happy in the friendly intercourse, I was suffer'd to enjoy uninterrupted; I was not willing to endanger that portion of felicity by an attempt, which might not only rob me of that, but render me in your eyes contemptible; how—how can you wonder at my forbearance? when the fear of losing you, awaken'd all my caution, and forc'd content in scenes of visionary bliss.

Luc. Ah! me!

Sarc. Whence—oh! whence that sigh?—tell me I conjure you, tell me, what must be my fate?—may I feed on fond hope, or must I feel contempt, and fly for ever from your sight?

Luc. Spare, spare my blushes, and be the dear interpreter yourself.

Sarc. 'Tis happiness—'tis bliss—'tis extacy—

Enter

Enter CHARLES.

Ch. Happiness, bliss, extacy—I shall alter your notes I warrant you.—Spare your extatic raptures for some future occasion—there's no time for trifling now.

Luc. Cruel interruption!

Sarc. Curs'd fortune!

Ch. Look into the garden, see who are there.

Enter Mrs. TESTY.

Mrs. Test. You need not—I can tell you—Mr. Schemer and Pomposo.

Luc. My mother!

Mrs. Test. Hey-day what's the matter—you all look, as if you were petrified.

Luc. Madam—Madam—I, I, I, I—

Mrs. Test. Madam, Madam, I, I, I,—You're certainly about something, you're ashamed of—honesty never hesitates—upon my word, on particular occasions, you great wits are arrant fools—Why! your wit seems to be frozen like a bulrush, in a sheet of ice—it just nods to shew it vegetates.

Luc. The names of those gentlemen did surprize me—I confess.

Mrs. Test. What! before you knew their business?

Ch. No, Madam!—I—I, had just mentioned it to my sister.

Sarc. Well blunder'd off at last.—(aside)

Mrs. Test. Well, and what think you to the proposal?

Sarc. Faster then ever by Jupiter.—(aside)

Mrs. Test. Is not that English—

Sarc. But such as we don't understand.—(aside)—Proposal, Madam! they are qualified, and capable of making any proposal.

Mrs. Test. O my conscience! I think they are—Or two such old fellows cou'd never expect success in a matrimonial view with my daughter.

Sarc. Death, and fire!

Mrs. Test. Sir!

Sarc. Only an expression of astonishment.

Mrs. Test. And sweet, dear little Sophy.

Ch. I'll cut the rascals throats.

Mrs. Test. Another expression of astonishment—What is all this Hocus Pocus work about?

Ch. We may as well tell the whole truth—as we were just coming to ask your approbation, and court you for our friend—I am in love with Sophy—and poor Sarcasm—

Sarc. Was never in so wretched a plight in all his life.—(aside)

Ch. Is dying for my sister.

Testy

Mrs. Teft. You were coming to make me your friend, you say?

Luc. Truly.

Mrs. Teft. Well, I love honesty—and therefore Charles, I'll tell thee, I approve—highly approve of the step you have taken—and as for Sarcasm, I confess I'm not surpriz'd—

Sarc. O! that I was a bulrush.—(*aside*)

Mrs. Teft. Nor angry—

Sarc. My dear—sweet Madam!

Mrs. Teft. Not so violent, Sir!—I will stand both your friends as far as prudence will permit me—and as for these two things of tare and tret—I'll disappoint them, depend upon't—for I have not the least idea of selling my daughter, and Sophy, like cattle at a market to jobbers—I know them for two shrewd, covetous wretches as live—I dare swear that in making the bargain with your father, they have not spent above six-pence, and very likely put off a light guinea—besides they wou'd even then set it down to loss, and deduct it out of the profits, if they purchase—I am an old fashion'd woman, and love old fashion'd dealings—None of your light gilt chariots, and heavy hearts—I'd rather walk a foot all the days of my life with my mind at ease—than roll in all the pomp of misery—If you, my children! can only be happy—your portion in this life is sufficiently compleat, and my days will end in peace—Let's in, and try to make you so—But you, Sarcasm! may as well entertain those gentry in the garden—find out your rival, if you can—whilst Charles, and I, form some plan for you, which you probably cou'd not form for yourself.

Exit Mrs. Teft, Charles and Lucinda.

Sarc. My rival!—base born—hold, let me not descend to low abuse—he ill deserves Lucinda, who can suffer passion, or disappointment to degrade him so far, as to treat with contempt a man, because on him fortune showers her favors more lavishly. *Exit.*

SCENE, a Garden.

Enter SCHEMER and POMPOSO.

Sch. Our general plan of operation being thus compleated—let us settle the particular one between ourselves—our view is to make a trading voyage of it—and profit the ultimate end of our wishes—Money, and matrimony are the two objects—Love, and affection seem quite foreign to the purpose, so that if we can only load our vessels at any rate, I presume, we shall not dispute about the cargo.

Pomp. No, no, no—As the fortunes of the two girls are equal—but I wou'd have us regular in our entries, and keep fair accounts open?

least upon examination, the copartnership may be discover'd—and here you know we must *appear* to trade upon our own bottoms—Therefore Sophy shall be my debtor—Lucinda yours—That plan will do.

Sch. For you perhaps it may; but you must permit me to think for myself a little—Sophy is independant—I don't like the proposal—it wears the appearance of overreaching—and if you will not act upon the square with me, you shall wade thro' the mud yourself; and then you'll appear in your true light—damag'd goods in a slack market.

Pomp. Here's a rascal for you—I must humor him tho'—if I play him the same trick he intends for me (*aside*)—I made the proposal, Sir! only as I thought the scheme most eligible, from my acquaintance with Sophy, and Testy's high opinion of you—You will do more with the old fellow in one hour, than I shall do in twelve months—However if you chuse it, it shall be otherwise.

Sch. Let me consider—You're right—you're right—I have the most weight with him—But suppose this shou'd not answer—what's to be done then?

Pomp. Reverse the business, and try the event—that may be attended with better consequences—The devil's in't if one of us does not succeed—and in that case we'll share the profits.

Sch. Agreed—But I think we shall have no occasion for a second stratagem—for the letter of this morning, with Allgrace's proof positive, may so rouse the girls to rage; that in the very fit, as revenge is sweet, they will gladly fly into the arms of the first men that offer—for that oftner gets a man a wife, than any intrinsic merit of his own—and curse me, if I care, how I procure th' *argent*—so my coffers are but fill'd.

Pomp. True—Get money—get money—'tis the noblest maxim in life—for what's a man without it—he may be honest—but not of half the consequence.

Sch. Cou'd the girls be secur'd, we shou'd have very little trouble on any other account—I know the old man so well—he's steady—fix'd to his purpose—and will gorge any bait we throw in his way.

Pomp. He must by this time have swallow'd pretty freely—'twas a wife saying—and is an excellent lesson—By governing our own passions, and artfully taking advantage of other mens, we are in the certain road to profit—It should be wrote in letters of gold—all men in trade shou'd have it—and I believe all successful ones have.

Sch. Without doubt—I imbib'd it at my first setting out in the world, and have persever'd in it ever since, thanks to my father—'twas the only thing he taught me.

Pomp. 'Twas a fortune to you.

Sch. I believe so—For my master was a man of gaiety—fond of company, and dissipation—tho' he talk'd much of the main chance—I took

every

every opportunity to encourage him in those pursuits foreign to his interest—till by my assiduity, and his own neglect, he was rendered a meer cypher in business.

Pomp. So you palm'd upon him, self interest for diligence—gain'd his confidence, and the worlds good opinion; whilst you was plotting his downfall—'twas wise, and very laudable.

Sch. You shall hear—That part compleated—I then began for myself, secur'd all his customers; and left him to an empty shop, and his own reflection.

Pomp. You should, as I understood, have married his daughter.

Sch. That also I cou'd have done, for 'tis true I courted her—but that was a matterstroke—for from thence I easily learnt the nature of all his private connections—which was of no small service to me—but finding out amongst the rest, she was not likely to have a fortune—I broke off with her under a pretence of jealousy.

Pomp. Generalship—generalship—But here comes Sarcasm.

Enter SARCASM.

Sarc. Save you, gentlemen!

Pomp. Save you, young man!

Sch. Your servant sweet Sir!—You seem to fix your residence here.

Sarc. Thanks to my good stars, who favor me with so great an indulgence.

Pomp. Here seems to be every thing your heart cou'd wish—if nature, or if art can please you—Beside the ladies, Mr. Sarcasm! the ladies—their agreeable company must heighten every pleasure.

Sarc. As they were not the least of our pleasure—I fear they will be the source of our greatest misfortunes.

Sch. Why so—why so?

Sarc. 'Tis whisper'd this day is to fix the marriage of them both, with two wealthy merchants of the City—whose fortunes, and whose characters are undeniable—Every thing we are told is ready for a conclusion.

Pomp. (*Aside to Schemer*)—The deed's done—hear that.

Sarc. I wish them happy, for sure I am, they merit it.

Pomp. Who then are the favourites?

Sarc. That seems to be a secret—But they are shrewdly guess'd at—For the transactions of men of their consequence cannot long lie hid, as they command the public eye.

Both. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Sarc. Why do you laugh!

Pomp. At our own skill—Dexterity in managing love-matters—Secrecy is the life of trade—and it is the very soul of love's traffick—

We

We never strike but when we are sure—Snug's the word in all matters of business—had we not conducted this with the greatest caution, how think you we cou'd have brought it to this crisis, without the world's knowledge?

Sch. Aye, aye—the shortest road's the surest—the longer the journey, the greater danger of breaking down.

Sarc. I shou'd wish to learn your art; and shou'd think the labor of half my life well bestow'd, to be crown'd at last with such an acquisition—but fortune always favors the wary—So you, Sir!—(to *Pomposo*) seize the beauties of Lucinda—and you, Sir!—(to *Schmer*)—those of Sophia.

Sch. Reverse the tale, it will tell better.

Sarc. Indeed, gentlemen! I cannot help admiring your adroitness—Every day's experience convinces me of the folly of my own notions—'till now, I imagin'd, an honest heart was sufficient to steer a man, successfully thro' life—But I find a good head more essentially necessary.

Pomp. 'Zounds Sir! do you dispute our integrity!

Sch. 'Sbodikins! my credit was never disputed—my draught for thousands wou'd be negotiated thro' every town in the kingdom.

Sarc. These things I never doubted—I was only inveighing against my own ignorance—In love, and war—all stratagems are allowable—A man wou'd be laugh'd at, who was to attack a fortress, without a regular plan of operation.

Pomp. That's *very* true.

Sarc. And therefore a man may very justly lament his own misfortune, whose heart may be all courage, if his head is incapable of forming schemes adequate to the attempt.

Sch. The matter's reconcil'd.

Sarc. Suppose you walk in, gentlemen! the ladies will be impatient.

Pomp. I fear they will.

Sch. 'Tis more than probable.

Exeunt Schmer and Pomposo.

Sar. Politic scoundrels! so these thieves of fortune, have laid their heads together—juggl'd the old fellow—and look upon the contract as certain as if they had bought a pack of Scot's cloth, or Irish linen.

Exit.

SCENE, TESTY'S House.

Enter TESTY.

Test. Yes! yes—I must have Swash's opinion in this matter—Tho' he his rough—very boisterous—proud, and passionate—yet he knows what's

what's what, as well as any man in the kingdom—especially concerning the main point—and that's a material consideration as things go now—As for character, circumstances, and situation of every individual, even those he most despises, I believe no body in town is better acquainted with every particular—'Tis amazing how he acquires all that knowledge—indeed his ears are open to the tales of every lying, dirty, whiffing gossip, male or female, that goes to his house—but I care not—his having it is enough for me—it is of no consequence, how he comes by it.—

Enter SPRUCE.

Well! have you done firrah! as I order'd you!

Spr. Yes! Sir!—The Justice is gone to the sessions on particular business—and will wait on you as soon as they are over.

Test. That's well—that's well.

Spr. But he desir'd I wou'd tell my young Master to attend him there immediately—he cou'd not do without him.

Test. Want him, at the sessions?—what can this mean—Did he tell you on what account?

Spr. No, Sir!—But I believe its something about a rape, or bastardy.

Test. A rape—a rape—my son—and bastardy—How do you know?

Spr. The hall is full of nothing but fat priests—old batchelors—stale maids—and hungry attornies.

Test. Take that you rascal—*(strikes him)*—You're going to turn wit, are you?—Did you hear any body whisper any thing?

Spr. Sir! I, I, I, I.

Test. Why do you stammer, you scoundrel!—tell me, you dog! what you know?

Spr. I did hear the names of Mr. Charles Testy—Mr. Sarcasm—and something about bastardy—and all that.

Test. All that! —The devil of an all that I fancy—So, so, so—I suppose my young libertine, and his very worthy companion are caught now, with their all that—Edad I'll be at the bottom of it—I'll find out their all that—The cement of their friendship is all come out at last—Iniquity—They'll very likely call this wit too—I'll to the sessions myself, and see the result of all that—Two young profligate rascals!

Exit.

Manet SPRUCE,

Spr. So here's a fine kettle of fish—We shall have a glorious dust kick'd up to day—My old Master will be all fire, and faggot—my young one, and Mr. Sarcasm in deep disgrace—the two young ladies in the dumps—for if there is not some tender negotiation going forwards among them—I have lost my cunning—O! lord, O! lord—what storming—
what

what swearing—what weeping and wailing—shall we have now—'Tis whimsical—ha! ha! ha! that seduction thou'd be the portion of these sobbers, and sighers!—Well, 'tis an ill wind which blows nobody good—I was going to turn truant—but since I find the powerful workings of the spirit cannot conquer the yearnings, and cravings of the flesh—I'll e'en live as I am—keep my mind at ease—enjoy myself in the house of plenty, and laugh at the distraction of the whole family.

Exit.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE, TESTY'S House.

Enter Mrs. TESTY and BETTY.

Mrs. Testy. **S**O, So, so, here are fine doings indeed—such a rout! and such a rompus in town! and all about my son—It must—it must be false—I am certain—it can never be—after all the care and pains I have bestow'd upon his education; you know Betty—*(Betty holding up her hands, as if praying, inattentive to her Mistress)*—What's the fool at now?—star gazing as usual.

Betty. Madam!

Mrs. Testy. You know, I say, my boy was not brought up like other folks children, now a days—I began early with him in lessons of morality, as soon as he cou'd read—always put good books into his hands—made him go over Pilgrim's Progress, five or six times—Bunyan's hipp-hop to happiness—made him ask long blessings, say longer graces—

Betty. All very good, Madam!

Mrs. Testy. Made him also keep fast every Friday, and almost all lent, regularly, that he might be proof against temptation—for all your fish eating fasters say, there's a fund of cooling virtue in abstinence.

Betty. Yes, Madam! to be sure—but as Mr. Allgrace, that good man says—something more's requir'd—nay a great deal—to keep young souls from stumbling—for in them there are such burnings, and scorchings—such heavings, and cravings—such hurlings, and twirlings—that they are, for all the world, like smoke jacks.

Mrs. Testy. Why this fellow—this teacher of yours—by his comparison—must have been some cook, scullion, or chimney sweeper—for they are all made up of such trumpery.

Betty. O! lord! ma'am! he's a great scholar—he always makes one understand him—what signifies hearing what one cannot carry away—it does one no good—I never cou'd understand our little limping curate in all my life—But Mr. Allgrace makes it out as plain as a tea-kettle.

Mrs. Testy. Let's have it then.

Betty. The smoke jack is man—body, and soul altogether—The flyer's their passions—the box, which contains the oil, the soul—the fire below, the world—Oh! Madam! is it not all very natural?

Mrs. Testy. Go on.

Betty. Now when the fire is stirr'd, up goes the smoke of sin, and fleshly lust—whirr go the jack fliers, hurry, scurry—away scours the

oil, and soon consumes, by hard working—for it has no ease, no, no, no ease—for they're always a stirring—and stirring—and stirring—so long as a spark's left.

Mrs. Test. For goodness sake! do get done with thy stirring.

Betty. It soon begins to creek, and grate, and wear away—like hardn'd sinners almost hunted down by Satan—and then—aye, Madam! what then?

Mrs. Test. Why you are all fit for the Lunatic Asylum—if it will ever be ready.

Betty. It stands still—worn out—cannot be mended—Whip comes the devil, like a whitesmith—tears it down—knocks it in pieces—and throws into his furnace—Oh! he's a divine man.

Mrs. Test. A divine man!

Betty. Oh! certainly—For he can save it—and none but him, or some of his brethren—he can give it some of his smoothing oil—and make it go as glub as ever—and it will never again be out of order, while its under his care—I have heard him say so a thousand times.

Mrs. Test. Was there ever such a heap of nonsense jumbld together—So because he has turn'd your fools head—you suppose he's to have the same power over every body's else.

Betty. Happy, happy for the world, if it was so—I'm sure he's my greatest comfort—till I knew him—True are the words he spoke—I was always grunting, and grunting in the sty of vice—and routing, and routing in the sludge of sin—till he had wash'd me white, and made me clean as a sucking pig.

Mrs. Test. So I suppose he takes the whole bench of justices for sucking pigs; and is gone to make them believe my dear, innocent boy—For I'll never believe him otherwise—was grunting in the sty of vice—But I'll put all his smoke jacks, and smoothing oil to the tryal, and if he wrongfully accuses my son, which I'm sure he does—I'll have his head put into the pillory, and see whether his oil can make him slip himself glibly out again. *Exit.*

Enter ALLGRACE to BETTY.

Allgr. Well, my lamb of virtue! I was searching for you.

Betty. Here however you must not stay; my Mistress has this moment left me, in a terrible passion against you, about her son—she vows revenge.

Allgr. That business is over—The law in this case leaves not a loop hole to creep out at—But now I want to give you some admonitions—you who live in the sink of uncleanness.

Betty. I have no opportunity now, I expect my Mistress back every moment.

Allgr.

Allgr. Meet me then in the evening—bring me all thou hear'st or see'st—my business with you is of a nice, serious, and very private nature—In the mean time be of comfort, I'll purge thee of all unworthiness; in earnest, therefore, receive of me this holy kiss.—*(kisses her warmly.)*

Enter Mrs. TESTY.

Mrs. Test. So these are your burnings, and cravings, and routings, and gruntings—a mighty religious ceremony upon my word—I hope you do the same to all your flock at parting—'Tis I presume consistent with your office—This I suppose is some of your mysteries—the reliques of some ever-to-be-observ'd custom—some spice of the purity of your love feasts.

Allgr. The heart of innocence may always give the kiss of truth.

Mrs. Test. A true kiss, I dare swear—I don't wonder at his calling thee a sucking pig—'tis a nice dish—but I shall beg the favor of your innocence, and truth not to instruct your sucking pigs in my house—And therefore—

Enter TESTY.

Test. Well my dear! my son Charles is an ungracious boy—and Sarcasm an infamous scoundrel—'Tis all prov'd against them.

Mrs. Test. What's prov'd against them, good Mr. Credulity?

Test. That you are soon likely to be honor'd—

Mrs. Test. Honor'd—honor'd—by what?

Test. One or two, of Allgrace's backsliding flock—He, poor man! was forc'd to appear much against his inclination—to save, as he said, their blushes—and ease the prickings of their wounded consciences—He can tell you the whole.

Mrs. Test. Pray tell me—try to convince me.

Allgr. Repetitions of the tales of woe are always so displeasing, and galling to humane minds, that I wou'd wish to avoid the task.

Test. Do oblige her—and spare me the pain.

Allgr. Miss Coaxer, and Miss Whcedle—once innocent—have been seduc'd from the path of virtue, by the artful insinuations (pardon me, Ma'am! I cannot refrain from tears) and more than hellish devices of those workers of iniquity—those journeymen of Belzebug—Mr. Charles Testy, and Mr. Sarcasm—Great, great is their fall—for I have ever labor'd with them like a slave in a vineyard, to keep them in the right road—but, lo! they have been tempted, and led away to their undoing, and my confusion.

Mrs. Test. What! what! must I become grandmother to an illegitimate brat—and a methodist—Two things I abominate, more than an Alderman does a bad dinner, or a strolling player a puppet show—What! can the rich blood of the Testys, mix with that of an hypocritical conventicler—it cannot be—I won't believe a word of it.

Allgr. Be not Madam! one of the unruly misbelievers—you cannot question my virtue—you will not dispute my truth—for it falls from my lips, pure as a new blown flower.

Mrs. Test. 'Tis a contrivance for some very sinister purpose—To screen yourself, I believe—for you are one of your back flyders, if the truth could be fairly come at.

Test. Don't be so violent—I'm satisfied—the justices are satisfied—every body's satisfied.

Mrs. Test. You're a fool—the justices are fools—you're all fools—and that whining, canting, preaching publican, is a very great sycophant—not to say worse.

Allgr. Was I not blest'd with forbearance, abundant in passive virtue—Patience must break its bounds—but I am meek as a lamb—willing to bear the stings of nimble tongued slander—it is our portion here.

Test. This is going too far indeed Mrs. Testy—poor Allgrace is not to blame—his moral character—and irreproachable conduct shou'd exempt him from such severity.

Mrs. Test. Moral character—and irreproachable conduct!—I can hold no longer—I caught this delicate piece of morality kissing my maid, as if he wou'd have devour'd her.

Test. Well my dear! and where's the harm?—'Tis a common trick with all professions—with all ages—from puling innocence in long petticoats, to wrinkl'd antiquity in dotage.

Mrs. Test. No harm in it!—

Enter CHARLES and SARCASM.

'Tis well you are come—Your father says there's no harm in Allgrace's kissing my maid.

Ch. I wish there may be no more harm in some other of his actions.

Mrs. Test. You see harm, I know, Sarcasm!

Sarc. Upon my honor I must be of the same opinion—You see, my dear Ma'am! 'tis the very test of politeness—'Tis a custom which reconciles contradictions—and is the cement of cordiality betwixt contrarities—I have seen a smooth fac'd metropolitan, kiss a bearded hebrew—A fine lady, her fulsome goat—Miss Languish her lapdog—Miss Feeble her monkey—I have seen, with envious eye beheld, repeated show'rs of nectar pour'd from the lips of a divine widow, upon the dirty back of a squirrel, who barter'd them all for a nut-shell—I have seen my Lady Rantipole kiss her fav'rite hunter, and freely lavish those blessings on a fox's cub—No wonder, therefore, a puritan pays the same compliment to a pretty convert—'Tis his mite of holy love—spotless—unallay'd—Therefore all kissing is not criminal.

Mrs.

Mrs. Test. Good stars! have I liv'd to this time of day, think you, and can't distinguish the difference between the kiss of compliment—friendship—folly—politeness—and nasty, filthy passion?—There was more treachery than purity in it—I promise you.

Test. You are too censorious—Zounds in cases of this kind, you married women, have no more charity than old maids (*as they are call'd*) who rail most severely at the slightest breach of decorum, in hopes of raising the world's opinion of their chastity.

Ch. Which they wou'd at any time pay a round sum to be legally rid of.

Sarc. Or tho' really forfeited, the offence may have laid secure under the wing of Prudence, *for you see her always perch'd upon their eye-brows*—that sober, grave, discreet, and very guarded matron—for she seldom breaks loose, but under the sable cloak of night, nor ever puts herself in the power of a confidante, that is not a similar offender.

Mrs. Test. To be sure you are all doating—You, Mrs. Modesty! see no harm in it, I presume—leave the room, and if I find any body kissing you—or you kissing any body—or both kissing together—I'll make it the dearest employment you ever had in your life, you baggage!—(*Exit Betty*)—As for you, Sir! pray let my house be disgrac'd no more with you.

Allgr. Piety, truth, virtue, have no chance with a ridiculously enrag'd woman—Therefore, praying that some power may subdue this whirlwind of destructive passion, I humbly take my leave. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Test. Was there ever such a set of unthinking blockheads?—You don't consider consequences it is plain.

Sarc. There cannot be any, the act is simple—begins and ends in the same moment.

Mrs. Test. It does, does it Mr. Wiseacre?—But I tell you, with all your wisdom, you can see no better than a mole—Why, these knaves preach the wenches into confidence, kiss them, or do any thing to bring them into compliance, make them believe a story of a cock and a bull—disclose the secrets of every family they live in—which they employ for their own wicked purposes—and if this clamor, which has been now rais'd, does not prove what I have said to be true—say that I am unfit to hold the reins of government in my own family—but be led, about like a blind fidler at a country feast. *Exit.*

Test. Charles! Charles! Charles! this affair of thine is a very odd one—prithee, tell me—be honest—how is all this?

Sarc. 'Tis easily accounted for—tired of the hypocritic doctrine of this very godly leader, the lady has chose to take to herself a priest of a different order, and try whether the religion of laicy, is not superior to that of spirituality—that's all.

Test. Puppy!—

Ch.

Ch. Is it friendly to jest with me at such a time?

Sarc. All imposition—nothing more—how can you be serious?—Where's the advantage of innocence, if we are to feel the weight of guilt?—am not I under the same predicament?

Test. Edad, that's one comfort—thou art caught in the same trap—try thy wit now—I hope thine will be a girl.

Sarc. Psha! 'tis an infamous falsehood you know.

Test. All imposition—how can you be serious—ha! ha! ha!—Shou'd it be a boy, you dog you!—it will come snarling into the world—if it shou'd, treat it as they do kittens, and blind puppies, throw it into the river—drown it you scoundrel; and rid thy friends of this spawn of mischief—But Charles!—thou shou'd'st have made a better defence.

Ch. What stronger defence can I make? upon my honor—my oath—the girl's to me a stranger—

Sarc. Honor won't do in that court—Nor oaths in those cases—The laws are pretty absolute.

Ch. It must be a severe law, where neither the honor—nor the oath of a gentleman are equal to that of a prostitute.

Test. Well! saith Charles! thy observation has some weight—'tis very hard, however we must endeavour to make the best on't—Notwithstanding this, I can't say but I am, more than a little, pleas'd, at the honor accruing to our rising genius here—our old friend—Oh! thou wilt make a sweet nurse—thou wilt cut a good figure with a bantling in thy arms—there thou wilt have scope enough to exercise thy wit, and tag rhimes—

Oh! my kitten, my kitten,

And oh! my kitten, my deary, &c.

Exeunt Testy and Charles.

Sarc. There goes the true portrait of the little world—glad to exercise his raillery—and give pain to others—in the very character he condemns; and in the very mode he severely, and perpetually censures.

Exit.

S C E N E

Enter SARCASM.

Sarc. Tho' I have a most sovereign contempt for these two mercenary knaves; and a very high opinion of Lucinda and Sophy, still I'm afraid—Money is so prevailing an argument with parents, that, with a cruelty abominable to humanity, they shut up every avenue of the heart to love, and real affection; the only solid basis of happiness—If this idol is so universally worship'd, I shall no longer wonder at women making such a rout about chastity; and thinking every necessary species of virtue center'd

center'd there—My astonishment at the repeated history of divorces will cease—I shall look upon a chaste wife as a prodigy; and alimony the natural consequence of marriage—and that every wealthy fool, who purchases his love like a race horse, will be jockied by his groom, and feeder, and wear his honor as content as a lord or duke.—*(a loud knocking at the door)*—'Zounds who comes here, some guzzling justice, tir'd of his duty, to dine with Testy, I suppose—for self consequence more than the desire of doing good, makes many of them grasp at power—disgrace the seat of honor by folly—and play the tyrant by commission,

Enter SWASH.

Swash. Is Testy at home?

Sarc. Yes! Sir! he's just at hand, he has been appriz'd of your coming, I presume.

Enter TESTY.

Sw. Good morning—good morning—how do you?

Test. At your service, Sir!

Sw. You sent for me on some particular business I understand—what is it? be brief—I am in haste.

Test. I am just upon the eve of marrying my daughter—and I wanted your opinion of the match—'tis a good one I assure you.

Sw. To whom do you wish to contract her?

Test. To Schemer—the rich——

Sw. Tradesman you mean—you astonish me—I should as soon think of marrying my daughter to a wild Indian.

Test. Why so? pray.

Sw. Your notions must be low and groveling—You are capable of giving your daughter a very affluent fortune—look then at higher game—'tis the mode of the world—from the beggar to a king—The beggar looks up to the man of business—The man of business to our rank—The gentleman to a lord, and so forth—Therefore never think of dropping your family.

Test. But I consider happiness as the ultimate end of marriage—and I have known felicity oftner harbour in the lower, than the higher stations—besides, if we consider a little closely, we shall find *all great as they are, originate from trade, and many, even of the proudest, a very few years remov'd.*

Sw. Grant it—grant it—but which of them looks at what they were? not one—we all look at what we are, and stretch the eye to what we may be higher—still carrying ourselves forward in the scale of greatness—Was not this the case, all distinction wou'd be at an end.

Sarc. So Doll, the cinder wench of yesterday, seated by chance in her own chariot to day, forgets her poverty, and sieve, and is truly Lady Cinderilla, and as such regarded.

Sw. Without doubt.

Sarc.

Sarc. Then you are a tradesman—you, have I know, mercantile concerns.

Test. What's the dog at now!

Sw. Exports—exports—foreign connexions.

Sarc. So, tho' you despise the name of trade, yet you love the sweets;—and attain them at the expence of your country.

Sw. Your proof, stripling! your proof—I'll soon quiet this reas'ning whelp, I'll warrant you.—(to *Testy*)

Test. I wish you may, it's more than I can do.

Sarc. When the calamities of your country call'd for the liberal hand of a SAVILLE to relieve them—you turn'd monopolizer—pour'd forth the scanty produce of the land to a foreign shore—tore from the indigent, the very staff of life—avaritiously grasp'd at the kings bounty—and purchas'd wealth at the expence of your humanity.

Test. Edad, this whelp will take a deal of quieting.

Sw. Zounds! *Testy*! fire! I shall burst.

Sarc. You cannot deny it—ask your heart—apply to your own feelings—if you have any—the picture is but lightly touch'd.

Sw. You lie you rascal!—I have feelings.

Sarc. Aye—But then they are for yourself.

Sw. Such assurance—such impudence—*Testy*! why don't you dismiss him?

Test. You'd be hang'd you dog! ten times a day, if giving offence was felony—Leave us.

Sarc. Curse my tongue!—I shall undo myself again. [Exit.

Sw. Now am I at peace again—What was you going to say?—he has put it out of my head—a mushroom—glib tongued jackanapes!

Test. Yes, yes, he's pretty free spoken—I love the whelp too—when I'm not with him—I was going to say—Schemer is rich—may be advanc'd to some high office—

Sw. Of what consequence is any office a man of business can attain? A cook has been a Sherrieff, and a butcher may be a Lord-Mayor—Let that therefore have no weight with you.

Test. I cannot see it, I confess, with the eye of contempt you do.

Sw. I look upon them as scarecrows upon a land of corn—they may raise the wonder, and terrify birds of their own nests—but those of nobler flight, will perch upon the very gibbet, and play with the eyeless sockets of mock terror—'Sblood, Sir! you must have a spice of meanness in your own composition.

Test. Sir!—I wish Sarcasm was here—(aside)

Sw. Why, Sir!—if I conjectur'd my daughter—had an atom of such a thought in her composition—I wou'd disinheret—nay I should swear her mother had play'd false with me—but it is impossible—I have instill'd into her such elevated notions, as must raise her greatly above the common herd of mankind.

Enter

Enter SARCASM in haste.

Test. What's the matter—you're out of breath?—

Sarc.—(to *Swash*)—Your Servant is running all over the town in quest of you—there is in your house the saddest scene of confusion, that ever was known.

Sw. What the devil's the occasion?

Sarc. Billy Blossom the pinner, has run away with your daughter to Scotland!

Sw. Eh! how! what!

Sarc. Billy Blossom the pinner, has run away to Scotland with your daughter.

Sw. D—n—Hell pin her if she has!

Sarc. Besides—Mrs. Swash, has been in hysterics this hour—thrown down your little boy, and broke his arm—that the whole house is full of nothing—but shrieking—squalling—Surgeons—Doctors—afacetida—and hartshorn.

Enter SWASH'S SERVANT.

Serv. Sir!—

Sw. Sir!—Get me post chaise this instant—double load my blunderbuss—put in my small sword—fill it full of fire arms—I'll after them—

Serv. But the Doctors say my Mistress, and little Master!—

Sw. Damn the Doctors—your Mistress, and little Master—my daughter—my daughter—hell—furies—horror—disgrace—fly you scoundrel!

Exit Servant.

Test. Mitigate your rage, good Sir! it is over—it cannot now be prevented—What end will your pursuit answer?

Sw. My pursuit answer!—I'll blow the Priest's brains out—stab the villain Blossom—burn the certificate—and hence prevent the ignominy which awaits me—Oh! misery!—misery!

Exit.

Test. The lord have mercy on us! what a terrible thing is passion—So this impetuous man, disregards the misfortunes of his poor distracted wife and has his mind fill'd with nothing but murder, and all for what?

Sarc. Meerly to gratifie his pride.

Test. 'Tis a terrible evil—I wou'd not be a slave to pride for all the world.

Sarc. Now is my time to expostulate with him.—(aside)

Test. It brings on such a train of ill consequences—faith! I think it brings more men to the gallows—than whoredom, or gaming.

Sarc. Pride, Sir! is the father of petulance—and don't you think, you have known some men of our acquaintance, in as great a rage for the meekest trifle upon earth?

Test. What's that you say, Sir?

Sarc. Pride is the father of petulance—and don't—

Test. Thunder, and lightning! you rascal!—you are going to be at your old tricks again are you?

E

Enter

Enter CHARLES.

Ch. You seem flutter'd father! what's the matter?

Test. This imp of provocation!—'sdeath—but I'll govern my temper—I'll govern my temper.

Ch.—(to *Sarcasm*)—Wit again, *Sarcasm*! some of your keen strokes.

Sarc. No! upon my soul! only a gentle hint half finish'd.

Test. Triltram Shandy's was a wise motto—a very wise motto—(looking angrily at *Sarcasm*)—I am cool again—cool you dog you!—I've a good mind to break your bones.

Sarc. A pretty picture of a calm temper that—(pointing to *Testy*)

Test. Swash has been here, and my dear boy!—

Ch. I've heard of the accident—The Servant has told me all—I met him just now.

Test. What he said relative to my daughter's marriage, makes me demur.

Ch. How so?

Test. Schemer is a man in trade, we therefore by this connection lose our dignity.

Ch. True, Sir!—That will be the opinion of some of the great world—For their ideas of men in business are very contemptible—*tho' they have been render'd great by its advantages*—They will not allow a tradesman to have any pursuit, that does not contribute to their interest, or pleasure—and, hence look at them, in the same view, as their butler—or pointer.

Test. That's selfish—very selfish tho'!

Ch. They hate to see them come too near their own standard—A man of business may be an adept in music, there his excellence is passable—but if he treads in *any other path*, tho' not half so laborious, they stigmatize him with the neglect of the main point—his application is term'd ridiculous—and his qualification the highest offence he can be guilty of—I have known one of these *very great* men turn off his taylor for writing an Epigram—because, he said, if he cut *so close with his pen*, he might cut as short with his sheers, and *his coat might suffer* in some of his flights.

Test. It may be very prudent—but it is very nonsensical—Such examples are better despis'd than pursu'd—I'll in and think on't. [Exit

Ch. I am unhappy to a degree at the success of this abominable imposition—Nor do I see how we can discover the fraud, and punish the perfidy of these two strumpers.

Sarc. Punish—you cannot punish them—those inveiglers—those plunderers of innocence—fortify their whores of grace, with too powerful notions for that.

Ch. Explain thyself,

Sarc.

Sarc. In order that *they* may riot in the sins of the flesh; they persuade them, no actions of the body can contaminate the mind, when *they* have once secur'd them above—and that is easily done *by their intercession*—hence, you see, their religion turns bawd to their vicious passions—their sanctity advocate for their purfes—and pious fraud a sconce for perjury.

Ch. But what effect will it have on Lucinda and Sophy?—They I fear, will not be persuaded we are innocent—and hence probably reject us.

Sarc. Be not afraid—Were all these things true, it wou'd not affect them so violently—or if it did—they wou'd be the first girls, that ever discarded their lovers, because they were rakes—No, no, an honorable libertine has too many charms in his character for that—Life, spirit, grace, dignity, generosity, and an hundred etceteras which counter-balance *the naughty sallies* of youth.

Ch. But Sophy thinks deeply—is delicate in her nature—and scarce durst run the risque of a rake's persisting in that course of offence.

Sarc. Pshaw! one wou'd swear you knew no more of the sex, than the longitude; their own vanity makes them glory in the attempt of reformation—and ensures their success; and they have more satisfaction in the thoughts of making a convert, than in their union with a grave man of virtue.

Ch. Aye—but if they forgive us, I doubt the pardon will be loaded with some harsh conditions.

Sarc. What! wou'd you have them divested of all the small artillery of love—throw aside all reserve, which can enhance their value—let them indulge the sweet deceit, and fancy we can't discover the cobweb covering—the gentle, tender folly will amuse them, but won't render us less secure.

Ch. I am not satisfied with the present determination of the bench—I'll apply to them again.

Sarc. What! where whim, prejudice, or ignorance, *with the Majority of them*, directs the scales of justice—nay where her very first instrument, sleeps o'er his duty, and forms decisions in his dreams—if you are determin'd, apply to the favourite council, whose candor, humanity, moderation, and knowledge soften the rigor of justice, and make his determinations equitable.

Ch. Agreed—But then our proofs—how must they be procur'd?

Sarc. We must set Spruce to work—he'll soon make some discoveries—he's very sensible, and Cambridge has made no small improvement in him, during his attendance on you—By your mother's story of Allgrace, and Betty, we can readily rouse his jealousy—for tho' I know of no passion which renders men half so ridiculous—yet I know of none, which makes them more active in revenge.

Exeunt.

Enter

S C E N E,

Enter LUCINDA and SOPHY.

Luc. Now don't you think, my dear! that my father's consolation was very whimsical—(*imitating Testy's manner*)—"Edad, as I was not accus'd myself—they may blunder thro' it as well as they can"—with all that gravity—and inward comfort—ha! ha! ha!—

Soph. What do you laugh at?

Luc. To think he shou'd be happy in not being accus'd of pulling down a church—when he is scarce able to kick over a bird-cage.

Soph. Indeed Lucinda! I think you look too lightly at this matter—for I declare I wou'd not marry any man in the world, who was guilty of such enormities.

Luc. Now, my dear! do you say that, as if I was to believe you?

Soph. By all my hopes of happiness!

Luc. Then, fair severity! thou mayst weave thyself a willow garland, as soon as thou pleasest—thou'lt never be married—that I can tell thee, without the least power of divination.—Now, my sweet Sophy! if, *by making a noble stand in the cause of virtue, we cou'd work a general reformation*, the experiment wou'd be worth the trial—but according to the face of things, as that is impossible—I shou'd not be over fond of mortifying myself, and giving up the man of my heart, because he had the heart of a man—nor losing the pleasure of being an happy wife—for the false delicacy of a self-tormenting prude.

Soph. So you wou'd run the risque of being perpetually tortur'd with the pangs of jealousy?

Luc. Not so, neither—my dear!—every sensible woman has something about her to prevent that—besides marry a man of understanding, his delicacy won't suffer him to offend you before your face—and if he does err—he'll take care it shan't come to your knowledge—However, I'll enter into any scheme to put them to the severest trial—and if they don't wipe away all this fine spun folly—we have not one single feeling of human nature about us—that's all.

Soph. But let us search rigidly for truth—for it is more serious consideration with me, than you're aware of—and will make me regulate my conduct in future accordingly.

Luc. The regular rule of both our conduct will, I dare say, be very soon seriously fix'd.

Soph. And I think we shou'd first attack Allgrace—he may perhaps convince us without further trouble.

Luc. With all my heart—Convince us he may—but if he makes converts of us, Plato shall wear the quiver and Bow—and little Cupid turn philosopher.

Exeunt.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE, TESTY'S House.

Enter TESTY, Mrs. TESTY, SOPHY and LUCINDA.

Mrs. Testy. **W**ELL, Mr. Testy!—So you still remain positive—
and think it very ridiculous in attempting to defend Charles from these cruel aspersions?

Testy. What wou'd the woman be at with her aspersions, her cruelty, and stuff—'tis a common failing—happens every day to the best of men, and is always pardon'd by the best of women.

Mrs. Testy. To be sure times are greatly alter'd since my youthful days—Modesty was not then thought a folly—nor diffidence an error—blushing was a mark of grace—No wonder the lower class fall a sacrifice to unruly passions, when girls of the first fashion set such examples—Pertness they call Wit—forwardness, Spirit—familiarity, Ease—affectation, Politeness—and the *bon ton*—

Luc. Every thing which can attract, or engage.

Mrs. Testy. The men only, I presume you mean, Miss Pert!—for on my conscience, there's no part of dress, or address but seems to have the property of fishermen's baits.

Soph. But they are calculated to catch fish of value.

Mrs. Testy. Like fishermen, my sweet Ma'am! if they can't catch salmon—they'll often be content with flounders—for *fish they must have*. In our days we had no short stays—slimy gauze handkerchiefs—or no handkerchief at all, with a bobbing pretence hung about the neck—no high-heel'd shoes, long cut quarters—and short petticoats, *to attract*, as you call it—no mouse color'd eye-brows, carmin'd cheeks or bismuth'd necks *to engage*—no large feathers on little heads to feed folly, and fan folly—no chicken gloves—no civet, musk, or ambergrease to sicken nature, or stink her out of fashion.

Testy. Your beauty, my dear! did not want at that time of day such assistance—Your charms were to be sure the evergreens of your native country—virtue and simple neatness!

Mrs. Testy. Nor had we any methodist priests to encourage, and support harlots—nor credulous fools enough to believe them, if they had made the attempt—However, I am so firmly persuaded of my dear boys innocence, that I'll stir all the powers on earth, but I'll prove him so—and if I do, I'll have old fly boots ty'd to a carts tail—and make him sing one of Westley's hymns of repentance, to a tune which was never set to music.

Testy.

Test. Do be pacified—Your passion will carry you beyond the rules of good breeding, and after we have done all we can, we must bear the burthen at last.

Mrs. Test. Come, go in with me, and I'll soon convince you, that the honest passion of an old English woman, is by far more useful, than the delicate nonsense of all the italianiz'd, and frenchified fripperies in the kingdom.

Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Testy.

Luc. Well, my dear, Sophy! I hope the storm is blown over, and your resolution of destroying yourself by marrying Pomposo, stands in its proper colors, truly ridiculous; since you have seen my brother.

Soph. My partiality wou'd have got the better of every other consideration—for when once we have fix'd our affection; we seem glad to catch hold of the most trivial excuses, for pursuing the bent of our own inclinations—and in this case I am firmly persuaded he is injur'd.

Luc. So the tide of love, now flows into your lately enrag'd bosom, with encreas'd rapidity, and all will soon be calm again—'Tis the case with us all—The fear of losing the belov'd objects, generally redoubles their power—and shou'd convince us of our own weakness—but happy for us, few of them see it—else might they as securely be tyrants in love—as after marriage.

Soph. I pitied him—felt for his distress—even in the midst of all my rage—every sigh made such an impression on my heart, as beggars all description—and when I thought to have shewn him the force of my resentment, and left him without hopes—I forgave him—how little do we know ourselves!

Luc. Most pathetically express'd—Who wou'd not be in love!—Poets it often has made—and orators too, I believe—My spark went a different way to work—He thinks it not below him to use common sense in courtship—he call'd in reason, and argument—convinc'd my understanding, and made me almost hate myself for believing any thing to his prejudice.

Soph. It makes philosophers—enthusiasts too I think.

Luc. In truth, my dear! it makes any thing, and every thing of us.

Soph. So think I—But I have consented to play my part as Charles directed me.

Luc. So have I, my dear! good soldiers seldom disobey command, at least of generals they are fond of.

Soph. Come we must now prepare for the farce.

Luc. A farce indeed, for grown gentlemen in love are really farcical.

Exeunt.

SCENE.

S C E N E,

Enter TESTY.

Test. Right woman, by all that's mischievous! ask their advice—clap them into a plot—whiz they mount like sky-rockets as rapid, and short liv'd—But Sarcasm they say is fond of my daughte—the whelp can't have the impudence—but those wits have damn'd assurance—I'll watch him narrowly, and if I find the rascal playing this game upon me—Zounds! I'll, I'll——

Enter SOPHY.

Well my dear! I see you attend agreeable to my desire.

Soph. I wait your pleasure, Sir!

Test. I have, you know, laid my whole intention before you—I shall now leave you to your own discretion; and hope you will not treat with disrespect the advice I have given you—at present I must leave you—for I see your lover at hand. *Exit.*

Enter POMPOSO, bowing very low.

Pomp. Well, Madam! I suppose your guardian has inform'd you of the purport of my errand here?

Soph. Yes, Sir! I perfectly understand it.

Pomp. Then it will be needless to say any thing of my fortune, or connections to induce you to enter into articles, and ratify the bargain.

Soph. What can the brute rake me for? hops, or rum I suppose (*aside*)—O! Sir! matters, I dare say, will come to a very speedy conclusion.

Pomp. I doubt it not, Madam! you think sensibly—you act wisely—but that has ever been your character.

Soph. But that sense, and wisdom won't agree with your rule of arithmetic.—(*aside.*)

Pomp. I say it is well consider'd, the quicker business is done the better—many accidents happen between the *cup* and the *lip*—and we, who know life, are better calculated to conduct you agreeably thro' it than your young flighty jacks, who from their happiness in the mind—all ideal, meer shadows—when compar'd with that solid, substantial bliss, we older fellows realize—one pound sterling is better than a whole cargo of such mental felicity.

Soph. I have been taught to think differently.

Pomp. Taught to think differently—aye there—there's the curse of polite education—and reading books of nonsensical refinement—notions pick'd up from scribbling fellows, who never cou'd earn more by their brains in a day, than a chop or a sixpenny cut behind St. Clement's—and indeed to many of them, that's being in high luck—'tis luxury.

Soph. Your arguments I find are built on sure grounds; they cannot be contradicted—Experience is the best master. *Pomp.*

Pomp. Right, right my Sophy!—Heav'n seems to have pointed out your road to happiness, and you prudently embrace the offer.

Soph. But I hope my guide will be a more eligible one than yourself. — (*aside*)

Pomp. Most young ladies of your fortune, wou'd think of nothing less than a gentleman—why one reputable tradesman is worth a ship-load of such prodigals—Their incomes are stipulated—they have but two rent days in a year—we have one every day—a tolerable law-suit, or, according to the mode of betting now a days, a little ill luck upon the turf, or at a gaming table, will bring them in such debtors to cash; that seven years penury won't strike a balance in their favor—and then what becomes of their wives?—Think of that, Sophy!

Soph. Familiar coxcomb (*aside*)—But these are mischiefs, which may be prevented by prudence, moderation, and oeconomy—And these I hope are virtues, which may be found among the great.

Pomp. Rarely, very rarely—the inavoidable expences of stewards, butlers, housekeepers, cooks, grooms, horses, dogs, and pleasures of a more expensive, as well as less delicate nature, eat them out of house, and harbor.

Soph. Still there is one amusement amongst the polite catalogue, you have not mention'd—therefore will have no objection to it—which I confess myself so great a slave to, that I shou'd hope to be indulg'd with it, whatever state I may be thrown into.

Pomp. What's that Sophy! a moderate one I don't doubt?

Soph. Music—It harmonizes the soul—

Pomp. Harmonizes—Why 'zounds! it is a more expensive burthen upon a man of fortune than drums, militia serjeants, or the licence office upon starving publicans—By all my hopes of profit!—I wou'd sooner have a rake tune my wife's conscience, than a music master tickle her ears, and turn her brain—there can be no melody without gain; and don't you think there are more sweet, delicious, tones from the chink of an hundred yellow boys in a canvas bag, than in the execution of all the Giardinis, Pintos, and Camidges in the kingdom?—Edad, I know which tones these masters like best, and they must be allow'd competent judges.

Soph. Custom indeed is second nature—and I am persuaded when you are my director, I shall find the same charms in their notes, as you do.

Pomp. Still, still to my wish—Reason is always the most powerful advocate—as few words are best, I'll in to your guardian, and tell him matters will be soon concluded.

Soph. I have said so.

Pomp. Admirable young woman!

Exit.

Soph.

Soph. Hog in armor!—Was ever girl so courted?—was ever conquest so easy?—did ever vanity lay the foundation for so compleat a disappointment?—Money—money, is the beginning, middle, and end of this lover's catechism—and of his creed too, I believe—If I have not play'd my part well, agreeable to the plan propos'd, fortune be unpropitious! and if honest Charles, does not properly recompence me for all this finesse—I'll turn general, and fight my own battles. *Exit.*

S C E N E, *Enter SPRUCE.*

Spr. A blessed employment I have got truly! ferret master Allgrace, thro' all his twistings, and windings—It may be fine sport—but 'twill be plaguy troublesome—For he has more cunning than a bawd in fashion—more impudence than my Master's prating apothecary—more schemes than an intriguing chambermaid—and more fools, and knaves to lie, and swear him out of a scrape, than any villainous attorney false witnesses to back a bad cause—I think I had better wash my hands on't—But the goat's chops, I am told, water at my little brunet—do they so? good master! nay then have at you—and if all other schemes fail—I'll e'en do as some of more consequence in life have done, *for the sake of gain*, change my religion—and by that means become one of his tribe, and do by him, as he does by the world; deceive thro' faith—and be as *grace-ful* a scoundrel as ever cheated his friend thro' confidence—or his flock thro' pretended zeal—But here comes Betty—

Enter BETTY.

My sweet, dear charming girl!—

Betty. Hold off, Sir!—I have taken leave of all the vain things of this life—and am working for an higher state.

Spr. My angelic soul! you overjoy me—the state of matrimony which I have long, long wish'd for.

Betty. 'Tis all over—yes, all over—I have jogg'd too long in the path of vanity—and lift my eyes only to things, far, far above this abominable world.

Spr. Oh! ho! 'Tis true the old lurcher has been here—unstrung my fiddle—and when I shall get her into tune again, heav'n knows—I'll try for it however.—*(aside)*

Betty. Oh! Mr Spruce!—this good man has open'd my eyes, and made me see such things, as I never saw before—Such cups of comfort has he given me—they warm me within—and make me a new woman.

Spr. I don't know what his cups may do for you—but I am sure they make me shiver like an aspin leaf—You know, you little rogue! I have lov'd you long—you have always promis'd me fair—what makes you alter your behaviour at this time?

Betty. He bids me leave off all thoughts of you—you and such like, are more destructive to young maidens, than weasels to a dove court.

Spr.

Spr. He's a lying varlet—I wou'd not hurt you for all the universe—Those sparkling eyes, those rosy cheeks, those sweet pouting lips, set me all on fire—By this delicious kiss I swear—I'll live with you, die with you, do any thing with you.

Betty. For shame Mr. Spruce!—That's just what the good man said—you wou'd promise all things, and do nothing.

Spr. You dear, little bewitching jade! ask and have.

Betty. Beware, says he, of Spruce, his love is like the sick lion in the fable—he'll court you into his den—and then destroy you.

Spr. What shall I do to convince you?

Betty. If I tell you, you won't do it—will you Mr. Spruce?

Spr. Command me—I'll fly to serve you.

Betty. Indeed—indeed you will, will you?—swear.

Spr. By all the—

Betty. Stop, stop—Oh! me! I'm running back into the suds of sin—and must be again sours'd, and dash'd about like dirty linen.

Spr. Come, my lovely girl! tell me what it is? I am all impatience 'till I can satisfy you.

Betty. May I trust you?

Spr. Beyond all doubt—May my Master wear his cloaths till they are thread bare—may he only keep one hunter—may I never see a new guinea—or ever keep the key of the wine cellar—if I deceive you.

Betty. Well then—will you—will you—marry me?

Spr. Humph!—I'll promise however (*aside*)—I will.

Betty. But when?

Spr. That question's plaguy close—but I must now go thro' with it (*aside*)—When you please.

Betty. Then my dear, dear, dear, Mr. Spruce! you shall be my priest—and I'll not meet Allgrace in the garden to night.

Spr. Meet Allgrace—have you often met him then?

Betty. No, never; but he desir'd me to night; as he had business of a very private nature.

Spr. Private nature—yes, I dare say it was—but if we marry, don't you think this Mr. Allgrace may *overload both* our heads.

Betty. Indeed—indeed I'll never speak to him again.

Spr. Not so, neither—Meet him—let me know the time—and something may happen to make both our fortunes.

Betty. I'll tell you all I know of him, what happen'd at Schemers, what he said to me, every word.

Spr. Well, go in—I'll follow you.

Betty. You won't forget your promise—You see what a great deal I give up for you.

Exit.

Spr. Bravo, bravo—Well done, honest Spruce!—let them preach as they please to such subjects—we sprightly, cleaver fellows can get the better

better of all their doctrine—tho' we go to work in the same manner—we excite the feelings—But as those of pleasure, are superior to those of repentance; I'll back dame nature for a thousand against all the sighs, groans, tears, and *tricks* of a tabernacle. *Exit.*

S C E N E, *Enter SARCASM.*

Sarc. I'm likely to cut a very ridiculous figure here—Let me examine the state of my account—how stands that? in love—and what to support it? Lucinda's approbation—dubb'd father—and by whom? a girl I never saw, and cannot confute—thanks to the *sett'd* rules of law—What have I to contend with?—age, avarice, low cunning, large promises, and a great fortune—If reason cou'd direct one in the discovery of future events, here I shou'd stop my pursuit; and prudently resign all claim to felicity from my present schemes—Hope then is my only consolation—and what my chance? a miracle—miraculous hope! which can flatter a man with the shadow of success against probability, nay almost even against possibility.

Enter SPRUCE.

Spr. Crown me with laurels—strew my way with roses—lay me on beds of violets—O! ye gods! and goddesses of love!

Sarc. Why, Spruce! you are a lunatic.

Spr. I am a conqueror.

Sarc. What have you conquer'd?

Spr. Aye there's the cream of the jest—marrow, bone and all—What have I conquer'd?

Sarc. Out with it, my dear Mercury!

Spr. Cupid you shou'd have said—for I've conquer'd a woman—and outwited the devil—and nothing but Cupid cou'd do that.

Sarc. I don't understand you—prithee be intelligible—don't trifle with me—thou wou'dst break the patience of a stoic.

Spr. Nay, Sir! if you are angry, I'm gone—I'll keep my secret 'till you are cooler.

Sarc. Come dear Spruce! a truce with all jesting, and to your purpose.

Spr. Be it so—The moment I receiv'd your commands; I flew to my invention, and executed my first commission—I met Betty, coax'd her into good humor, turn'd the tide of her affection from Allgrace, to a prettier fellow, myself—and open'd my whole budget to her.

Sarc. O! curse your vanity—'twill over set us at once—she'll tell Allgrace your enquiries, you fool!—Irishman all over—blunder at the onset.

Spr. Psha! Love, marriage, and vig'rous twenty one, are too powerful rivals, for age, sanctity, and a grey periwig—No! no! she wou'd

be afraid of losing me, if she betray'd me—She behav'd in a very different manner—she promis'd to aid me in future—and voluntarily gave me all she had at that time.

Sarc. And what was that all she had?

Spr. She said Mr. Allgrace had receiv'd fifty guineas of Schemer, this morning as a present—and had carried four of them back again, as they wanted six-pence half-penny of weight.

Sarc. So, he chang'd them—that's all.

Spr. No, he order'd him to go to those pilferers of postage—those devourers of discount, the *BANKERS*; he receiv'd them at their hands not an hour before—He went, but soon return'd with this answer—that they made it a standing rule, *for the sake of regularity*, whatever money they parted with either by mistake of themselves, or ignorance of the receivers, never to change a single guinea if it was *once* out of the shop door.

Sarc. Well, and of what use is that to us?

Spr. Hear, and rejoice—He therefore insisted on Schemer's doing it—Schemer swore he wou'd not, and was astonish'd at his impudence—words begot words—rage ran high—'till at last Allgrace vow'd he wou'd declare Miss Wheedle his wife—and for his sister Miss Coaxer.

Sarc. Aye, his sister—his sister—what of her?

Spr. He wou'd immediately heelpiece her innocence himself—and blow all their schemes to the devil.

Sarc. And blow them there too; it wou'd be a generous blast—But how came she by this knowledge?

Spr. By her intimacy with Schemer's housekeeper, who overheard the whole.

Sarc. Well, but this proves little.

Spr. But from a little, a great deal may arise—and if my letter of Marque does not run foul of a rock, or quicksand—I'll bring home the golden fleece—I have your good wishes, I presume.

Sarc. Certainly—Away, away, lose no time.

Spr. I am gone, Sir!

Exit.

Sarc. I must seek Charles—

Enter CHARLES, LUCINDA and SOPHY.

Luc. Well, now my dear brother! tell me the result of your close confab with my father, nor keep me longer in suspense.

Ch. I have given you hints my dearest sister! sufficient—and you are not apt to be dull—besides the brightness of your wit, and liveliness of your imagination, are capable of wearing off any distress.

Luc. How can you be so provoking?—I shou'd not delight in tormenting you.

Soph. Not a little, I dare pronounce.

Sarc. It may be witty—but 'tis nevertheless cruel!

Ch. Your most obedient tender hearted, sentimental gravity! [*Luc.*

Luc. Do, sweet Sophy! try your power.

Soph. How variation of circumstances alters our behaviour—now 'tis dear brother!—sweet Sophy!—What was it a few hours ago?—The law of retaliation has so many thousand charms—that it wou'd be a sin to abate a single tittle.

Sophy and Charles. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Ch. I declare the metamorphosis is highly comic—neither of them one smart thing to say on the occasion, who usually abound with repartee—O! love! love! love! what fools dost thou make of thy votaries!

Sarc. A time will come—

Soph. All heroics.

Sarc. When I may ask for an explanation in a different manner.

Ch. Death! and daggers.

Luc. 'Tis your time to laugh now—'tis very friendly—mighty humane—prodigiously consistent with your professions, to entertain yourselves at our expence.

Soph. Ha! ha! ha!—'Tis the very humanity of modern friendship.

Ch. To prevent death, and bloodshed, on certain conditions—I'll tell you the whole—tho' perhaps the conclusion will mortify you more than the suspense.

Lucinda and Sarcasm. Impossible.

Ch. You'll promise to observe my terms, put yourselves under my command, and act agreeably to my instructions exactly, throughout the sequel of this affair.

Boty. Positively.

Ch. Well then—my father is determin'd you shall marry—Schemer.

Luc. How!

Sarc. Then he shall gain her through my heart.

Luc. I'll die first—I'll go to him, and tell him my resolution before my fool explains himself.

Ch. 'Sblood you catch fire like tinder—I'll bring you clear off, with my mother and Spruce's assistance—for by this time they are closeted—and laying their heads together—like sly common council men, before the choice of a new Alderman—I wait only for a proper opportunity, and I'll warrant you we'll blow them both out of our territories.

Enter TRIM, speaks to LUCINDA.

Trim. Madam, Mr. Testy bid me inform you, my master was waiting for you in the next room.

Luc. I'll attend him directly.

Sarc. My dear Charles! forgive the hastiness of my temper—

Luc. I'll love you for ever.

Ch. Bless us—how quickly the wind shifts—When next we meet, things will wear a different face—or I have lost all skill in plotting.

Exeunt Charles, Sarcasm, Lucinda and Sophy.

Manet TRIM.

Trim. Now stand I here great as any lawyer in the kingdom—fee'd on both sides the question, and don't care a damn for either; nor oblig'd to give up one retaining fee—My Master has paid me roundly for doing all his dirty work—making a knave of myself; and Mr. Charles Testy has brib'd me doubly for discovering it—Now cou'd I only procure a third fee, for totally destroying what I have already done; mine wou'd be almost equal to any of the *most honorable* professions—Had it been election time, this might have been very easily contriv'd—I cou'd have liv'd at the expence of a candidate, I did not wish well to—voted for the man I had abus'd, and did cordially despise—turn'd my back of the party, that had been the making of me—bellow'd for licentiousness, and call'd it liberty—made a damn'd noise about magna-charra, and done every thing in my power to destroy it—However I must do e'en as well as I can in my own little way—make the passions of mankind my instruments—and their money my object—Then may I be call'd a *good* politician—for, I verily believe, sound policy is self interest; from a disappointed lord with his petition, to crafty Trim with his livery. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, Discovers LUCINDA, and SCHEMER in close conference.

Luc. These schemes of happiness are irresistible—the must be something more than woman, that can withstand the temptation—But when once secure of my person, and fortune; won't you like the rest of your sex, expect to become Lord Paramount—and say—I don't like this; it shall not be so—That's too expensive—I can't afford it—The world cries shame—'tis levity—and at last leave me with limited power over the kitchen.

Sch. Far be such thoughts from me—I wou'd not contradict a tittle, that was conducive to your pleasure—it wou'd be the only business of my life to procure it.

Luc. Let me recapitulate—post-chaise and four horses, with two footmen in livery—Spaws annually—routs monthly—Card meetings weekly—assemblies, or plays nightly—visitors, hourly—money to roll in—and whims, as numerous as I please, to consume it—delightful! what can I wish for more?

Sch. Baits to catch gudgeons (*aside*)—Nothing I wou'd hope, if I add to all these an affection not to be alienated.

Luc. I'm perfectly satisfied with these proposals—Tho' were I to try you, I believe they wou'd all vanish in smoke (*aside*)—But then on my part there will be something wanting.

Sch. What is it?

Luc. You have before convinc'd me money is the source of all these joys; and you mean to bestow it liberally on pursuits I admire—my fortune is scarce adequate to your merit, and boundless generosity; and my

my brother will be an insurmountable obstacle to any future addition—could that be remov'd, every present scene of imaginary bliss, might be realiz'd—Now for a trial of honor.—(*aside*)

Sch. Not so difficult as you imagine—He's young, open, in the very heat of youth; fond of every pleasure, and a variety of vicious pursuits displeasing to your father.

Luc. Past doubt.

Sch. We therefore can contrive to have him so plung'd in these scenes, as may rouse your father to rage—get him disinherited, or tied up with an annuity—and so come in for the whole, or major part of the estate.

Luc. But won't that be cruel?

Sch. Self-consider'd there can be no cruelty—in the eye of the world charity begins at home—and if numberless examples can be any vindication, we shan't want cases to fly to—for it is no uncommon thing to see the heir of a great family riot in luxury, whilst the younger branches, bred up with the same notions, are merely existing on small modicums, or almost starving.

Luc. But a suspicion of ungenerous dealing, wou'd make us despis'd.

Sch. By no means—all worship the golden calf.

Enter SARCASM, TESTY watching him.

Sarc. Your friend Pomposo, happy in the success of his enterprize, was this moment enquiring for you.

Sch. As, Madam! I always feel severely the distresses of my real friends; I am impatient to partake of their felicity—You will therefore excuse me a moment—I will return immediately.

Luc. Certainly Sir! *Exit Schemer.*

TESTY discover'd listening.

Testy. O! to be sure—So, she no sooner gets rid of one—but she's ready for another.

Sarc. Well dear Lucinda! how go matters here?

Luc. To our wish—he has it, and fancies I am his, all the world to a knot of silk—But how move matters with my brother?

Sarc. Swimmingly—to our hearts desire.

Testy. Do they indeed—mayn't you be mistaken tho'?

Sarc. Your brother has found out the villains; and can produce proofs incontrovertible—is just gone to prepare Sophy, and form the plan of attack.

Luc. I'm glad of it, for all our sakes—But if all these schemes succeed properly—what must be the conclusion?—what's to be done with regard to my father?

Testy. A necessary question that.

Sarc. There—there I am lost.

Testy. Not so much as you may be;

Sarc.

Sarc. As to himself solely consider'd, I shou'd be sorry to wound the goodness of his heart; or be instrumental in his misery.

Test. He talks it well—I wish he wou'd observe it.

Sarc. Was it possible—I wou'd wish to unite his happiness so with my own; that they may go hand in hand with each other—For, I must confess, so grateful is my heart—that was I in possession of yourself—what my soul most longs for—his disappointment, wou'd sometimes embitter my moments of joy.

Test. O! the wheedling son of a whore!

Luc. When he comes to know the extent, and reality of your honesty, I hope great part of the present difficulties will be overcome—but your want of fortune, I know him so well, will never be got over.

Sarc. In answer to that, I have but one scheme to propose, if you will accord.

Test. Now for it—

Luc. I'll agree to any thing for our mutual felicity.

Test. Who the devil doubts you.

Sarc. Refus'd by him as I now shall be—I will immediately go into orders—muster all my forces to procure a living sufficient to maintain us—that once accomplish'd—I will again ask his consent, if he denies my request; clasp you thus in my arms—pop you into a post-chaise—and away for Scotland.

Test. (*Meets them as they are going off.*)—The devil you will?—You'll pay the turnpike first, if you please; for I am the bar-keeper—Fine doings truly—I am in a blessed trim among you—Whilst I am securing to my daughter a proper husband—she has the assurance to chuse for herself—and a fellow, that edad! by and by, if it comes into his head, will undertake to prove that I am not her father—and quibble me out of my senses in an instant—Are not you a—but I'll not expostulate with you for a *notorious*—Troop, Sir! troop—leave my house—you sha'n't stay a moment longer—As for you, Madam! I'll take care of you; till you are dispos'd of out of his reach—and if you will take a trip, you shall break your neck out of the window—(*looks contemptuously at Sarcasm, and attempts to mimic him*)—"Take you up in my arms, pop you into a post-chaise, and away to Scotland"—Elegant conclusion!—Sir! your most obedient, humble servant—you'll observe my commands.

Exit Testy and Lucinda.

Sarc. Fortune! thou fickle goddess! what mischiefs hast thou more in store for me?—already hast thou learnt me this cruel lesson—The dependant, who fixes his heart upon any blessing before possession, is to himself a tyrant—by a hair suspends above his head a naked sword which any trivial blast of wind may break, and drop into his bosom.

Exit.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE, TESTY's House.

Enter SARCASM.

Sarcasm. IN what a deplorable situation do I view myself! alienated from a family from whence I might have some expectation, and torn for ever from her I hold dearer than life—and all by what? a passion I might have prevented, but cou'd not resist—what is stoicism? what philosophy! what all the boasted labor of the schools! let love once get the ascendancy, reason has no more chance to subdue its impulse, than an infant to regulate the motions of a wild colt—There seems to be a fatality hang over every action of mine; from hence forward I will be a child of chance, take whatever offers in the common course of things, nor ever aim at the accomplishment of any of my wishes—but Lucinda! Oh! Lucinda.

Enter CHARLES.

Ch. Hey-day—What's the matter now?—what accident has brought on this second fit of despair?

Sarc. What never can be recover'd.

Ch. How so?—Every thing succeeds to our wish—rouze, man?—the fruit is ripe, ready for plucking.

Sarc. Then it must fall to the ground, and rot for me.

Ch. Explain.

Sarc. Your father overheard the whole conversation which pass'd betwixt your sister, and myself—and when my damn'd wild imagination had hurried me on to schemes of happiness far distant; he pop'd upon us—dragg'd poor Lucinda to her chamber—lock'd her up—discharg'd me; and now I am upon the troop.

Ch. That's unlucky—but let me consider—I have a palliative for that sore at least—and time may perform a radical cure.

Sarc. Never, never—'Tis utterly impossible—I have not the least faint glimmering of hope.

Ch. Don't despair—I'll tell you—Sophy has consented to make me the happiest of men, and I don't doubt of my father's approbation—her fortune added to his generosity, will make our circumstances perfectly easy.

Sarc. But how can that affect me?

Ch. Be patient—Hence I relinquish all thoughts of the gown—therefore, the living my uncle intended for me, I'll resign to you.

Sarc. Your generosity is boundless—I cannot, dare not think on't.

Ch. The heart which meanly selfish will not assist it's friend, is to it self an enemy—for acts of friendship are their own reward——

Sarc. O! Charles!

Ch. You interrupt me—This plan must be executed shortly—for I have this moment receiv'd a letter which informs me, he will give his benedice up, as soon as I am in orders; on account of some scruples of conscience, which forbid him to hold it consistently with the canons of our church—and you I presume won't start at them.

Sarc. A good living relinquish'd thro' conscientious scruples! you astonish me—I presume those feelings won't be general.

Ch. What the feelings may be I won't answer—but the consequences will not I dare swear.

Sarc. Dear, friend! let me——

Ch. Psha! damn your speeches, if I was fond of them, I have not leisure to hear them now—I am upon the rack 'till the infamous rascality of these scoundrels is expos'd—You must be employ'd.

Sarc. Won't my presence offend your father?

Ch. Leave that to me—I'll prevail upon him to permit your residence here this night—and probably things may take a better turn to-morrow.

Sarc. Your cooler reason direct me.

Spr. Tallio, tallio—I've found him—I have him.

Sarc. Here comes Spruce, with the notes of a hunter, and the joy of Archimedes——

Enter SPRUCE.

Whence so light of heart?

Spr. The best head, the quickest invention—and the keenest wit in Europe.

Ch. Settle that head of yours, and give us the contents.

Spr. I have unkennel'd old reynard—he has stolen from one cover, and is going to creep into another.

Sarc. What do you mean?

Spr. I have dogg'd Allgrace from Schemer's—and he is going to meet Betty in the garden just now.

Sarc. Let's after them.

Ch. You and Spruce pursue him,—I've other business—Success attend you.

Exit.

Sarc. I don't doubt it—for these Villains of the first Class often rest their security on the very point which most commonly betrays them.

Spr. Come along, Sir! I tickle to be at him.

Exeunt.

SCENE,

SCENE, a Garden.

Enter BETTY, to her ALLGRACE, SARCASM and SPRUCE following at a distance.

Allgr. Is the coast clear—all safe within doors.

Betty. Ben't affraid, all's fast.

Allgr. I'm glad on't, for I wou'd not have the secrets which I tell to thee, o'erheard for twenty times such sums as these.—(showing her a purse of money)

Betty. Lord! Sir! You I thought was never rich; you had more joy in feeding the hungry, and cloathing the naked, than gaining money to pamper yourself with the dainties of this sinful world—I've often heard you say, it was the devil's dish.

Allgr. Thou'rt right my lovely monitor!—I preserve it but for them as steward—How go matters with Mr. Charles and Sarcasm?

Betty. As you foretold—The Merchants are to marry the young ladies to-morrow—what you have said has determin'd them; notwithstanding all the ill language my mistress gave you—poor, dear, good man!

Allgr. Then all's well—My full reward is certain two hundred and fifty pounds which the note promises is no bad thing, pretty picking and easily earn'd—if one had business enough, it wou'd be as profitable as the trade of premium and discount—and as conscientious too—But tell me, Betty! to make all secure, did Mr. Charles ne'er whisper tender things to thy beauty;

Betty. No! Sir! never in all his life.

Sarc. 'Zounds! seize the rascal.

Spr. Have a little patience—see him out—I've a lighter pair of heels than him, without he can run faster than he lies.

Allgr. But shou'd I bid thee swear he did, thou'lt not refuse me?

Betty. Lord, Sir! that wou'd be committing sin.

Allgr. Go, simple woman!—thou can't not commit a sin with me—I am thy leader—whatever I direct is right—thou may't do any act, *the world calls wicked*, to serve thy teacher, or the sheep of thy own fold—for *that intent* takes off the evil—and makes it good, and faithful doing.

Betty. Well then, I will—if you say so—you wou'd not lead me wrong.

Allgr. Not for ten thousand worlds—heav'n protect such tender lambs as thee—But let's retire into that harbor, there I'll tell thee all my pious care—how much I feel for thee.

Sarc. Perdition seize the goat—I cannot bear him longer.

Spr. Refrain a moment—'tis their common trick—sin, pray, and plunder all in a breath.

Betty. Your fright me, Sir!—you look quite different from what you us'd to do—you've lost your meekness—your eyes grow wild.

Allgr. Be not fearful—Come, come my dear!—here take this purse—thy fortune's made.

Betty. Indeed I da'n't go there.

Allgr. Refusal is a sin—a deadly sin—a heavy curse—therefore to save, I'll gently force thee.

BETTY shrieks, SARCASM and SPRUCE, seize ALLGRACE.

Spr. Hold Sir!—By your leave I'll save you the trouble—its an office may lay hereafter heavy on your conscience.

Sarc. Pretty kind of doctrine this—Pray, Sir! where might you learn these orthodox principles?

Allgr. Well, gentlemen! I am detected, I confess—but I hope you will be merciful.

Sarc. Upon condition that you will discover the whole plot, and who were your accomplices—we'll make no other use of you, than is consistent with our honor, and interest.

Spr. Your pardon Sir! I have only one slight punishment to propose, in order for the future to make him act agreeably with his profession; put it out of his power to attempt any similar mischief for the future—I have a very dextrous hand—very, very, light as the surgeons call it.

Allgr. (Dropping upon his knees)—For heaven's sake dear Mr. Spruce! spare me.

Sarc. Thou wou'dst not have all men mark'd who acted inconsistently with their functions?

Spr. Surely.

Sarc. Then I firmly believe, thou wou'dst have work enough for thy dexterity and light hand—No! Spruce—cruelty is no part of justice; leave him the power to sin, else can he never have the merit, or taste the sweets of repentance.

Allgr. My day is now over, the sheep's cloathing is pull'd off my back—now stand I quite naked, and exposed—I must e'en do therefore like other knaves under the same circumstances, impeach—and as I cannot raise the world's pity to procure me mercy—I must gain, if I can, it's pardon to secure my protection.

Exeunt.

SCENE;

SCENE, TESTY'S House.

Enter Mrs. TESTY and CHARLES.

Mrs. Testy. I tell the Charles! I am very certain of it—you need not perplex yourself with your fears, and doubts.

Ch. You see, Ma'am! my father remains determin'd in favor of our rivals—and they may find ways to avoid the accusation coming home to them.

Mrs. Testy. You young fellows in love are like passengers in a storm—one puff of wind makes them see death in a thousand shapes—whilst the next moment's calm they bid him defiance, as if he cou'd never overtake them—But here they come.

Enter SARCASM, ALLGRACE and SPRUCE.

Sarc. Victoria, victoria—here we have him.

Mrs. Testy. What my heart of innocence!—I suppose you have been planning some good work—teaching some elevated lesson of a smoke jack—Have you profitted Sarcasm?

Sarc. Amazingly—The whole plot as you suspected—with this advantage; Schemer's additional note for a smart sum.

Mrs. Testy. Then I hope, for the future you won't laugh at the sagacity of age—but condescend to think there may be some useful knowledge out of your seminaries of learning, as you call them; and within the reach of a petticoat.

Ch. There is no contradicting this strong proof.

Spr. But I hope my little Skiff, and myself are not to be forgot.

Ch. My dear Spruce, I am infinitely oblig'd to you.

Spr. Is that all—So, you'll treat me, I suppose, as most gentlemen treat little folks for past services; discard me upon the first illnatur'd report, without giving me a chance to clear myself, and think you do me ample justice, by giving me a good character, which you cannot fairly refuse me.

Sarc. And that's a great thing now a days—few men acquire the characters they merit.

Ch. I'll make your fortune you dog! you.

Mrs. Testy. And so you ought, Charles! tho' he's a rasti, yet he's an honest fellow—and there are few of that stamp in his garb, let me tell you.

Sarc. Then thou may'st marry—but mark me—wear thy honesty in thy hat; let patience occupie thy heart—thou may'st then perhaps be happy.

*Exeunt Mrs. Testy, Charles, Sarcasm, and Allgrace.**Manet.*

Manet SPRUCE.

Spr. Marry!—and so I will—and little Betfy directly—set up a public house—keep the sign of the pinching puritan—for great rascals, not great men shou'd be expos'd upon sign posts; and live as well, and as honestly as the world will let me, all the days of my life.

Exit.

S C E N E,

Enter TESTY, and SWASH meeting.

Test. Oh! Justice—I am glad you are return'd—I have made such discoveries—and we have had such confusion, since you left me—that my house is turn'd topsy, turvy—I am lost—bewilder'd—tormented to death.

Sw. Fire and faggots—what, Sir! are your topsy turvies—what are your torments to mine?—a flea bite to the crush of a cannon-ball.

Test. Sir! Sir! Sir! arn't my feelings as great as yours—is nobody to be in a passion but yourself.

Sw. No! Sir.

Test. 'Zounds! one wou'd swear you had swallow'd gun powder, and it had this moment taken fire—why you belsh nothing but flame—you are a perfect burning mountain.

Sw. Hear him—hear him—what a hotheaded old fool it is.

Enter CHARLES.

Ch. For heaven's sake what's the matter? gentlemen.

Sw. The matter—your father's lost his senses—gone stark staring mad.

Test. O! lord, O! lord, O! lord, who's fittest for Bedlam—you shall judge—hear me

Sw. Hear me first—There will be no need of comparifon—My misfortunes are manifold, as they are terrible—had the devil himself, that arch friend of mischief, been contriving plots of the most accursed nature ever since the fall—he scarce cou'd have had time, to have combin'd such a train of diabolic incidents, as have fallen to my share.

Ch. By your permission the justice shall begin.

Test. He will have his own way.

Sw. After I left you—I just slept home to see the situation of my own family—and then went in pursuit of my abandon'd daughter—I had not travell'd far, before I espied a post chaise scow'ring along the road helter skelter—pell mell, as if the devil had been postillion.

Ch. That was fortunate.

Sw.

Sw. Mark what follows—In order to be in readiness to wreak my vengeance on the rascal—I laid my blunderbuss, well loaded, on the chaise window frame before—ready cock'd—my finger on the trigger—happy in the reflection of the certainty of recovering my daughter, and the destruction of that presumptuous stuffer of pincushions.

Ch. You meant not to shoot the poor fellow.

Sw. As certainly as ever Enthusiast attempted to assassinate a monarch.

Test. Aye, and as madly too—heav'n preserve us.

Sw. 'Zounds! don't interrupt me—When by threats, imprecations, and fair promises to spirit on the drivers, we had arriv'd almost within shot—Oh! curs'd mischance! away flew one of the linch pins—smash went the wheel—souce fell the chaise—off slap'd the blunderbuss—down tumbld one horse, dead as a trippet—and the post chaise boy nearly in the same situation.

Ch. Mortifying circumstances.

Sw. But what was still worse—Burning with rage, and floundering in the mud—I saw the chaise, I was in chase of, fly as swiftly from me as a pidgeon in the eye of an hawk.

Test. These accidents, seemingly contriv'd by providence to check your impetuosity, shou'd make you reflect properly, and resign yourself calmly to the will of fate.

Sw. 'Sdeath Sir! the reflection of what happen'd was a trifle—The severity was to come; dress'd in all the horrors of disappointed dignity.

Ch. Your miseries must be great indeed.

Sw. Think, think—no hopes of recovery—my great revenge unsatisfied—our blood contaminated—a tradesman—a pinner rioting in the arms of a girl of fashion—and my daughter too—Let priests preach of punishment—methodists bellow forth damnation—what punishment—what hell can be adequate to my situation?

Test. Oh! sacrifice—Oh! impiety—when things bad as they are might have been worse.

Sw. How's that possible?

Test. You might have been destroy'd yourself—You therefore shou'd thank heaven for your escape—besides had you not been stop'd by accident, you might have committed murder in a passion, and been hang'd for it in cool blood—a pretty consequence of proper pride, and fashionable notions—I am sick of 'em.

Sw. 'Edad, there's something in that—I, even, I, might have fallen a sacrifice—But now, Sir! since in my case you can be so cool—pray tell us what the plague right you had to be so violent—Not many hours ago, you was going to make your house the house of mirth, how comes it so suddenly chang'd into the house of mourning?

Test. From my own sagacity, and my son's assiduity it appears that these two men, of whom I had so great an opinion, and had consented shou'd

shou'd marry my daughter and ward ; had form'd this scheme of matrimony, between themselves—and that the girls fortunes alone were the objects of consideration.

Sw. Why so it is with them all—bred up in the school of fraud from their cradles—their perpetual practice is the art of delusion—that men of our generous principles have no chance with them—I wou'd as soon trust a turk with my wife, as my purse with the conscience of a tradesman—You are therefore convinc'd of the nature of their honesty, and heartily tir'd of meddling with them.

Ch. Of these two only.

Test. Aye truly—But that is not my greatest disappointment—Sarcasm, that young dog! whom I had so lately countenanc'd, has, by that damn'd tongue of his, gain'd my daughter's affection—and made her ripe for revolt.

Ch. This is meer conjecture, I presume—suspend your judgement a little.

Test. Why, death! and fire!—I heard it all—heard it just now with these very ears.

Sw. He's one of the same strain, is he not?—the offspring of the counter.

Test. His father is in business.

Sw. I thought as much—Crush him too—without mercy—so I'd serve them all.

Ch. What without hearing him?—without asking for his defence?

Sw. Certainly—I wou'd no more suffer a *slave* of that denomination to vindicate himself against my humor—than I wou'd my tenant to dissuade me from raising his rent.

Ch. Then he's little chance I'll be sworn.—(*aside*)

Test. What shall I do with him?

Sw. Send him to his father—teach him servility—servility is the proper province of a tradesman—it will do more for him than all his wit, and knowledge behind a counter—they won't earn him pack thread to tie up a parcel.

Ch. But I hope, Sir!—(*to Testy*)—you will not be so precipitate in your determination—permit him at least to remain here this night—give him a fair hearing, and then pardon, or condemn him as you think proper.

Sw. And so before morning, have the same curst trick play'd you, as I have had—disband him, and be secure.

Ch. I'll pledge my honor, for my father's security.

Test. Well be it so—Let's for the present walk in—I'll unravel the whole mystery to you—and hope you will be of the party to expose these poltrons.

Sw.

Sw. Aye, surely—It will be some small sacrifice to my revenge, and furnish you with proper principles, such as we men in high life ought to be endow'd with—As for my own part; I shall never see a tradesman but he will give me the head-ach—or hear of his success, but I shall have a fit of the spleen, or cholic. *[Exeunt Swash and Testy.]*

Manet CHARLES.

Ch. So these two old fellows, having each told his grievance, are contented with their own recital without waiting for the determination of their judge—Old heads upon young shoulders is the constant wish of experience—could any young heads in the world be more heated than these two?—'Tis clear to me, the merit of old men lies more in their want of power to execute, than their philosophy in restraining their passions.

Enter SARCASM.

Sarc. What am I to hope, dear Charles?

Ch. I have succeeded with my father—You may, I think, be happy—he's hasty—but always listens to the voice of reason—and will forgive the faults of youth, as soon as any man I know.

Sarc. I must ever be your debtor.

Ch. Not a single syllable upon that head any more—The two heroes are by this time come in—All grace you have secur'd.

Sarc. Under a very safe guard.

Ch. Let us be ready to attend them—I'll go prepare my father—open your situation to him—and then to the field of battle—The whole company knows the plan—and will be with us at the signal I shall give them—away. *Exeunt.*

S C E N E,

Enter POMPOSO and SCHEMER.

Pomp. As I said, Schemer! notwithstanding the difficulties you thought wou'd naturally arise—you see we have almost got safe into port—my vessel I am certain is moor'd.

Sch. Why, faith! mine is just going to cast anchor.

Pomp. There is nothing like having a good head, and proper address—apparent honesty does more than real virtue in this life—and you know every thing was to be tried—the prize was not to be lost—four thousand pounds was a fortune too valuable to stop at trifles in acquiring it—It will help trade—encrease our credit, and give us consequence.

Sch. Besides, there's no discount—no drawback for prompt payment—and considering credit is at so low an ebb, and good money so scarce, 'tis a very pretty receipt.

Pomp. A glorious one—But hush—here come the discarded favorites!

H

Enter

Enter CHARLES and SARCASM.

Ch. Just return'd, gentlemen!

Pomp. Yes, Sir!

Ch. You have the advantage of us—Your avocations perpetually require your attendance, that you have scarce any time for the looser hours of gaiety—I wish mine was as happily fill'd up.

Sch. 'Twould in general be better; for want of that very employment, good hearts are often inviegl'd into the tramples of vice.

Sarc. True—But you, gentlemen! are doubly blest—you have not only business, but that of a most delightful nature—Matrimony.

Pomp. Truly so—When like ours, it is begun with honor, founded on prudence, and terminated in mutual affection.

Ch. How ill do those words become your mouth; you! who have prov'd yourself the meanest, the basest of mankind.

Pomp. I don't underitand you.

Ch. You shall before I have done with you—The artful subtleties of you both are now flagrant—no punishment can atone for such accumulated villany—interest is your god—hypocrisy your support, and calumny your instrument—You have not only endeavor'd to destroy the felicity of two worthy girls, by avaritiously grasping at their fortunes, unmindful of their inclinations, or future welfare—but, in order to attain that end, you have labor'd clandestinely to blacken the characters of men you knew no ill of; whom affection had render'd dear to them, that, awaken'd to revenge by fallacy, they might make your arms their asylum.

Sch. The fire begins to be too hot—I'll sheer off.—*(attempts to escape but stop'd by Sarcasm)*

Sarc. Hold, Sir! the shortest road's the best—the longer the journey the greater danger of breaking down—and I wou'd not have you run that risque for the world.

CHARLES waves his handkerchief: Enter SWASH, TESTY, Mrs. TESTY, LUCINDA, SOPHY, SPRUCE, and BETTY.

Ch. Still more—When you first concerted your diabolic plan—did you not bribe the very servants of the house to inform you of every secret movement of the family?—and thinking from their reports your projects might fail, if you cou'd not destroy us—attempt to alienate from me, my father's affection—from him—*(pointing to Sarcasm)*—his friendship, under different pretences, which these letters disclose?—nay have not you—*(to Pomposo)*—so certain was you of success, consulted a man of the law—villain like yourself—how the poor pittance of an allowance, left to Sophy's infirm mother, might be taken from her?—*O! shame! shame!*

Sarc.

Sarc. Whilst you, my soft tongued All-promise! modestly propos'd a scheme for drawing my friend into such scenes of offence, as might force a father to disinherit him.

Luc. They were the gentle notes of his disinterested love to me.

Test. Now ar'n't you two infamous, villainous scoundrels?

Soph. (*To Pomposo*)—One pound sterling is better than a whole cargo of mental felicity—Sooner business is done the better—The chink of an hundred yellow boys in a canvas bag, affords more melody than all the Giardinis, Pintos, or Camidge's in the kingdom—'Tis plain there's no music in your soul.

Pomp. These charges may be all false—where's your proof?—letters may be forg'd.

Ch. If my father will step into the next room, there are plenty of witnesses, whom you repeatedly brib'd, ready to attest what will put the whole out of dispute.

Test. I'll soon be satisfied—and then I'll play the very devil with them, if either law spiritual, or temporal can do it—and they must be as cunning as hell can make 'em, if *these* cannot lay hold of 'em.

Exit.

Mrs. Test. What occasion was there for satisfaction at this time might I have been believ'd?—but to be sure old women are no more set by than small shreds of old silk—they may do well enough for children to play withall—but I hope for the time to come, I shall be held in higher estimation.

Sarc. (*To Schemer and Pomposo*)—This is dexterity in managing love matters—snug's the word; secrecy is the very soul of love, as well as the life of trade.

Sw. Aye, there again, trade, trade—every thing constantly proves the truth of my assertion—that these fellows of traffick are all incorrigible scoundrels.

Ch. I differ from you there, trade is the very bulwark of the British Nation—and I think it cruel to stigmatize the whole, for a few despicable wretches, who have accidentally stolen into that honorable body—and in my opinion, the honest industrious professors are the greatest ornament to society.

Sw. (*To Lucinda*)—Your brother, notwithstanding this example, seems bigotted in his opinion—you, Madam! I hope will think differently.

Luc. Worth is worth to me however situated.

Sw. So then you mean to fall a sacrifice to trade—for I am given to understand, Sarcasm has pilfer'd your bosom.

Ch. What then?—According to your logic, a black gown, and three hundred a year, are no contemptible considerations.

Sw. The case is alter'd—A black gown, and three hundred a year, make him a gentleman.

Sarc. That cannot be—for we have known the most villainous principles, the blackest hearts lodge under those sanctions—'Tis manners dignify the man, not the outward covering or the casual gifts of fortune—and I am firmly persuaded vice is no more inherent in a tradesman's child, than in the heir of a duke.

Enter TESTY.

Test. Well, Charles! I'm convinc'd; 'tis all true—clear as the sun at noon day.

Pomp. Rank imposition, shallow artifice, bring forth our accusers.

Ch. Spruce, hand 'em in.

Exit SPRUCE, and re-enter with ALLGRACE, and TRIM.

Spr. Come along, old foxheaded sanctity!—here he is—don't be afraid, sweet morsel of regeneration!

Pomp. (*Seeing them*)—Then the devil has deceiv'd us.

Ch. There, gentlemen! what think you now?—will this proof satisfy you?

Sch. Perfectly, Sir!

Ch. (*To Schemer and Pomposo*)—Go, unworthy as you are! thank heaven you have fallen into the hands of lenity, and be your own reflections your punishment.

Sch. (*To Pomposo*)—Who are discarded fav'rites now?

Pomp. I wish I was fairly out.

Sarc. Reverse the tale, it will tell better—when you make another voyage, and load your vessels—I hope you'll secure your cargo.

Sch. It shan't be to the land of matrimony, nor with such ignorant, inconsiderate, and timorous pilots.

Pomp. Nor with articles so fluctuating, and perishable, as women, and refinement:

Excunt Schemer and Pomposo.

Allgr. Whilst I resolve never to appear in any court but my own—where I myself am judge and jury—for there with impunity can I deceive—and tho' as black as the devil in the court of common sense, still by a peculiar faith, of which my followers have a large share, appear as innocent as virgin modesty—I'll therefore stick to my old trade, and as I find it impossible to live well by the knowledge of mankind; I'll e'en grow rich by their folly and ignorance.

Exit.

Ch. (*To Testy*)—As you, Sir! have consented to my union with Sophy—I am persuaded, you wou'd not wish to have my happiness half complet.

Test. What can I do further for you?

Ch. Perfect it by bestowing my sister on my worthy friend, whose goodness of heart will amply recompence you for such indulgence.

Mrs. Test.

Mrs. Test. As I have given you some proofs of my penetration, let me in this case direct ; and prefer this snarling honesty, to all the shuffling pound, shilling, and pence men in the county—Sarcasm may make her happy—for tho' a good girl, she's like all your good girls of spirit—she'll require some managing ; and affection will do that on the easiest plan.

Test. Perhaps it will be disagreeable to Lucinda—what say you ?

Luc. As the disposal of my heart has given you too much pain already—bestow my hand as you think proper.

Test. Here, Sarcasm ! take her, and heaven bless you—make her happy—and I shall be truly recompens'd.

Sw. 'Zounds, this is so near a compleat victory over me, that it adds to my former misery—I'm sick—I'll to bed. *Exit.*

Sarc. Words are too weak to express the transports which I feel ; accept then the offerings of a heart, o'erpower'd by wonder, joy, and gratitude.

*With you, my fair ! I'll seek the vicar's seat,
From all the bustle of the world retreat,
And strive to make your happiness compleat ;
Pursue the path with honor I've begun,
And bless your days tho' but a Tradesman's Son.*

F I N I S

E P I L O G U E,

Written by the AUTHOR,

And spoke by Mr. POWELL.

*A*Vaunt! pedantic slave! for heav'n's sake cease;
And give my wounded ears one moment's peace:
To drowsy mortals of good nature preach;
We sons of fire a diff'rent doctrine teach;
On stronger wings we soar, beyond all rules
Prescrib'd by nature, or advanc'd in schools;
We critics, Sir! we critics, live to mawl,
And now my fury's rouz'd---have at you all.

[Turning to the audience]

First then to Eve's fair daughters I attend;
Let me observe you all, from end to end---
What the critique? Humanity wou'd pipe, and say;
Hurt not our gentle, tender sisters, pray:
At such soft stuff we laugh---'tis out of fashion,
We critics have no bowels of compassion.
Affrighted nature seems to gasp for breath,
Curl'd, feather'd, painted, and perfum'd to death.
You'll say I'm wrong---what then? we never reason;
In courts like ours the very thought is treason.

The men next, not that trifling, dapper crew,
Which nature musters to make up a shew;
But those who boast of letters, reas'ning pride,
And look contempt on all the world beside;
Them, them my critic eye wou'd fain survey;
I have 'em; stupid, dull, eccentric clay!
Nature, 'tis true, such monsters does exhibit;
But how? as centinels to guard a gibbet;

E P I L O G U E.

*Men who to genius are determin'd foes,
 And by dull rules our rapid flights oppose.
 My reason ask---no matter---'tis agreed
 By us ourselves, that class must ever bleed
 They blunt our edge, and spoil the critic breed.
 When they find fault they stoop to common sense,
 And from the cause deduce the consequence;
 We damn by wholesale---curse all whys, and where-
 [fores;
 All close discussions, all your theres and therefores:
 Enough if, like our critical reviews,
 Who damn at random what they scarce peruse,
 (But, led by pity, let us not forget
 These hungry Witlings only write to eat)
 We also damn without or rhyme, or reason;
 For cruelty is never out of season.*

*Ask all our critic fry above---around---below,
 What say my brethren? don't you all think so?
 No frowning brows? no odd sarcastic sneer?
 Our Author's right---I've gone too far I fear.
 To me he said---"I tread not ranc'rous ground;
 For mercy here incessantly is found;
 Like smiling beauty, pours her placid ray
 To cheer the fainting trav'ler on his way."
 Confirm him Prophet---let the healing balm
 Of lenient candor all his bosom calm;
 Disperse corroding doubt; with gentle smiles
 Approve his labor, and reward his toils.*

E P I C U R

It is not to be denied that
the mind is the source of all
our knowledge, and that the
senses are but the organs
by which we receive the
information of the world
around us. The mind is
the seat of reason, and
it is by the aid of reason
that we are enabled to
discern the truth from
the falsehood. The mind
is the source of all our
virtues, and it is by the
exercise of the mind that
we are enabled to attain
to the highest degree of
wisdom. The mind is the
source of all our pleasures,
and it is by the exercise
of the mind that we are
enabled to enjoy the
highest degree of pleasure.
The mind is the source of
all our sorrows, and it is
by the exercise of the
mind that we are enabled
to endure the highest
degree of sorrow. The
mind is the source of all
our passions, and it is by
the exercise of the mind
that we are enabled to
control our passions. The
mind is the source of all
our actions, and it is by
the exercise of the mind
that we are enabled to
perform the highest
actions. The mind is the
source of all our thoughts,
and it is by the exercise
of the mind that we are
enabled to think the
highest thoughts. The
mind is the source of all
our feelings, and it is by
the exercise of the mind
that we are enabled to
feel the highest feelings.
The mind is the source of
all our desires, and it is
by the exercise of the
mind that we are enabled
to desire the highest
desires. The mind is the
source of all our fears,
and it is by the exercise
of the mind that we are
enabled to fear the
highest fears. The mind
is the source of all our
hopes, and it is by the
exercise of the mind that
we are enabled to hope
the highest hopes. The
mind is the source of all
our dreams, and it is by
the exercise of the mind
that we are enabled to
dream the highest
dreams. The mind is the
source of all our wishes,
and it is by the exercise
of the mind that we are
enabled to wish the
highest wishes. The mind
is the source of all our
thoughts, feelings, desires,
fears, hopes, dreams,
wishes, and actions. The
mind is the source of all
that we are, and it is by
the exercise of the mind
that we are enabled to
become what we wish to
be.

